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#### WAGNER AND ROECKEL.

"I HAVE pointed out," says Mr. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, with exquisite unconsciousness of the comicality of his position, "the absurdity of the opinion which stamps Roeckel as Wagner's evil genius, and thinks that it was his fault that Wagner got mixed up in the revolution of 1849. Years before he and Roeckel first met, Wagner had declared, 'My path leads me to open revolution against what the present day calls Art.' " In a word, Mr. Chamberlain—who must not be confused with the statesman of the same name, for he is merely one of Madame Wagner's Bayreuth followers—actually wishes us to believe that when Wagner said he was prepared to revolt "against what the present day calls Art," he really meant nothing more nor less than that he was prepared to take up arms and revolt against the Saxon Government! A man who will believe this will believe anything. It is a pity, we think, that the duty of writing the preface to an interesting collection of Richard Wagner's letters to August Roeckel—recently translated by Eleanor C. Sellar, and published by Arrowsmith, of Bristol, and Simpkin & Co., of London—should have fallen to this gentleman. The letters, though interesting, are not really important; they tell us nothing about Wagner which we did not know perfectly well before. But humanity always wants to learn everything about a great man, down to the very friends he had at various periods of his life; and it had been possible to draw and paint "in his habit as he lived" a portrait of this wonderful August Roeckel, who had obviously exercised an enormous influence over Wagner in his early days. How enormous that influence was can readily be understood by those who, having read these letters, will take the trouble to reflect how Wagner treated and wrote to his other friends. Even with Liszt he was the general giving orders to the lieutenant he loved and respected; with the others he always was the master teaching his disciples, expecting implicit faith and unquestioning obedience. Contradiction was not to be thought of; he who ventured to indulge in more than half a word of criticism was regarded as false to the new gospel. Richard Wagner was to his younger friends the greatest musician, the greatest poet, the greatest dramatist, the greatest phi-

sopher, the greatest man in every possible way, that the world had ever seen or ever would see. We do not say this with any touch of contempt for Wagner's disciples: we can quite easily understand that without this belief in himself, and without the power of making others believe as firmly as he himself did, Wagner would never have accomplished the gigantic work he did; and we can understand that in presence of such a tremendous genius and character as Wagner, reverence and almost blind admiration was the only attitude. But we object to such young disciples, second-hand disciples we might call them, obtruding their views of Wagner's greatest friends upon us; we object, above all, to being told that no one save Wagner had anything to do with the shaping of Wagner's opinions and actions. Of admiration for Wagner, Roeckel seems to have had but little; of reverence, none. And the curious thing is that we get the proof not only of this, but of Wagner's acceptance of Roeckel as his friend on those terms (the terms, namely, of faint admiration and no awe), from Wagner's own mouth, so to say. None of Roeckel's letters have been preserved, possibly because in Wagner's later time, when his egotism had become all-devouring and nearly unendurable, he did not care to allow such evidence to remain in existence; but more probably because they got lost in the course of his many sudden flittings hither and thither. Still, Wagner's letters to Roeckel remain, and they prove unmistakably that not only did Roeckel contradict him with some recklessness, but that Wagner bore with the contradiction with considerable patience. It is quite plain that Roeckel disapproved of a score of things in Wagner's artistic schemes—quite plain that he expressed the disapproval with force and pungency. But Wagner argues with him patiently—argues with something of the cautiousness and fear of a false step with which a young man argues with a senior whom he holds in high respect. Instances of this we will give shortly: for the present we wish to point out that the whole drift of Mr. Chamberlain's preface is patently absurd, and that it is grossly unfair to the memory of an undoubtedly large and generous personality to have written such a preface. It is the greatest of pities that Bayreuth will not fight fair—or, rather, that it should wish to fight when no one else does, and that, having provoked a squabble, it should

fight with such doubtful weapons. No one now wishes to challenge the fact that Wagner was one of the stupendous geniuses of the century, and it would be well if Bayreuth could be content with this, and devote itself to bringing its performances up to date, instead of libelling not merely Wagner's enemies, which is unfair, but also his best friends, which is in the last degree dishonourable; and all with the object of proving the preposterous propositions that Wagner was the only man of the century worth mentioning, that he had no faults, that he owed nothing to anyone, and was never under the influence of anyone, and, lastly, that everyone who disagreed with him was either a liar or a fool, or at any rate did not really disagree with him, but only pretended to. And partly to show that we are not so unfair as Bayreuth, partly to show that Mr. Chamberlain himself knows the truth about the relations of Wagner and Roeckel as well as we do, we beg to point out that while defending Wagner against the charge of having been influenced by Roeckel, Mr. Chamberlain manages to give away his case by admitting that undoubtedly Roeckel did assist Wagner to take a higher view of life than he did in the *Rienzi* days, that Wagner did not write to Roeckel as he did to his followers or to Liszt, and that this fact was perhaps owing to his having known Roeckel before the moral and artistic regeneration which prepared the way for *Lohengrin*, the *Ring* and *Tristan*. Mr. Chamberlain in fact knows the truth perfectly well and often tells it; and having told it, he straightway proceeds to explain it away. Various sentences in his preface are perfectly fair to Roeckel; the whole preface is so contrived as to leave a distinctly unfair impression.

But, as has been said, our principal quarrel with Mr. Chamberlain is that, having an opportunity to give us a true and living portrait of August Roeckel, he has omitted to do so. It may be that Mr. Chamberlain felt his inability to paint a portrait—a portrait in words is not precisely an easy thing to achieve; it may be that he did not care to do so; it may be that a character who must be admitted to have been in some respects a finer character than Richard Wagner was not what Bayreuth wanted to have realized too vividly. For one reason or another the portrait has been left undrawn. We are put off with an account designed, we cannot help thinking, chiefly for the purpose of unfavourable comparison with the meanly flattering account of Wagner that immediately follows. The one thing we learn of Roeckel is his astonishing courage. He had not merely the courage, proceeding mainly from heated blood and an overheated brain, which enables men to face death in critical moments, but the courage to refuse to ask for pardon after he had suffered many years of imprisonment, though he knew that to ask for pardon meant liberty; and to refuse to ask, a lifelong gaol. He even asserted that if he was ever liberated he would immediately go on with the old work of trying to destroy the tyranny that misruled Germany. This same courage enabled him to remain at his post during and after the fighting in the Dresden streets: Wagner, there can be no doubt, fought like a man there, but as soon as it came to martyrdom for the cause, he very wisely skedaddled. Roeckel was obstinate as a rock, obstinate to the point of stupidity; and this was perhaps both a good feature and also a defect in his character, and certainly the cause of the tragedy of his later life. He took a certain position in his early days, and there he remained while all other things changed to such a huge extent that he actually found himself ultimately opposed to his former friends and an ally of his former enemies. That things and men do and must change was a truth he never grasped. Nevertheless, he had many splendid

traits, and was a first-rank man, and by no means the second- or third-rank man Mr. Chamberlain wishes us to accept him for. His absence of egoism after a long and wearisome imprisonment alone gives him the stamp of greatness. To say that he had not Wagner's genius is not to underrate him; and we certainly do not intend to underrate him when we say it. If he had not Wagner's genius, neither had Wagner his heroism, his power of moving people for political ends, nay, not even his power with the pen. And Wagner seems to have known perfectly well that though Roeckel had not composed a *Lohengrin* or *Tannhäuser*, and never would compose a *Ring* or *Parsifal*, yet he was a front-rank man after all, but in a different way; in fact, he seems to have realized that Roeckel had arrived in the front long before he, Richard Wagner, did—that he, Richard Wagner, had arrived there only by Roeckel's timely assistance, whereas Roeckel arrived there by his own unaided efforts. We sincerely hope that some day some competent artist in words will give us a full and true life of him; for that he was a man of wonderful personal force, keen and ready intellect, and generous emotions, will be denied by no one who has mentally put together the various allusions to him scattered about the Wagner literature.

We have already stated that Wagner wrote to Roeckel almost as a young man writes to his teacher—almost, but of course not quite, for after all they were much of the same age, and Wagner had the consciousness of greatness in himself as well as a consciousness that his friend was also great. In his first letter he tells Roeckel that he has just heard that the political prisoners are allowed to have letters, etc., and goes on to say that he himself has found artistic salvation through severing himself from all that the day called "Art." This, Wagner insists, was not art at all, but a poor lifeless imitation of real art manufactured for the market. Then he tells Roeckel how he is occupied with the *Young Siegfried*, the "opera" which afterwards evolved into the cycle of music-dramas known to everyone as the *Niebelung's Ring*. This letter appears to have been written about the middle of 1851; and it is not until the 12th of September, 1852, that we again find Wagner writing to his friend—this time in answer to Roeckel's reply to his first letter. By that time his plans had changed: *Young Siegfried* had already spread himself over the three great dramas and a dramatic prelude; but beyond this information—which, of course, we knew before from other sources—there is little to detain us. Neither does the third letter contain much that is striking; but in the fourth we learn that Roeckel has passed some "critical remarks" on the poem of the *Niebelung's Ring*. The first portion of Wagner's reply to these is a long philosophical disquisition capable of occupying the attention of no modern mind, and now to be read with effort only because Richard Wagner wrote it, and because one is curious to know how he thought. And those who have not read these letters may take the information from us that in philosophy Richard Wagner thought not very differently from other people of his time who were able to think at all. Before we arrive at Wagner's answer to Roeckel we are met with a most amazing specimen of Mr. Chamberlain's disingenuousness—a disingenuousness that seems to have no object and is purely fatuous. Wagner, in speaking of his *Lohengrin*, says that "according to my own conception" it meant so and so; and Mr. Chamberlain must needs rush in with a footnote to tell us Wagner meant "not *Lohengrin* pruned down and distorted for the use of Opera Houses." Now Wagner meant nothing of the sort: he only meant that he personally accepted the story as symbolizing a certain truth, leaving it to be inferred that

others did not accept it in that way at all ; and seeing that he is not at the moment talking of representations of the work but merely of the story, it seems to us ridiculous to go out of one's way to force a meaning upon his words that they obviously do not carry. However, this is merely by the way. The following portion of the letters is of infinitely greater significance. Everyone should read them, noting how carefully Wagner argues that he may never trip in sight of one who has found fault with his work, and observing also how very clear was the plan of the *Niebelung's Ring* when the cycle was commenced. Wagner combats Roeckel's objections at every step, never venturing to say, as he virtually said to all the world but Roeckel, If you don't understand you are a fool, and I cannot help you. This fourth epistle is indeed much the best and most valuable in the whole collection. In the rest we also see Wagner, who spent most of his life in attacking other people, hard pressed to defend himself against a friend who was quite capable of understanding his schemes without necessarily thinking them perfect ; but as none of Roeckel's attacks touched him so closely as that on the *Ring*, we do not again find him quite so obviously perturbed in his mind. Still, the perturbation is obvious enough sometimes ; and though we have no space here to discuss the letters in greater detail, we strongly advise our readers to procure and read them for themselves. The preface may amaze them, and even cause them to misunderstand the letters unless they take our advice and believe nothing stated therein unless there is absolute evidence of its truth ; but if they disregard the preface and read the letters with an open mind, they will see Wagner in an interesting phase and realize also that Roeckel was probably the strongest personality he ever met and certainly one who dominated and impressed him to a great extent in his Dresden days.

#### ALLA BREVE.

WHO does not remember the delightful scene in "Through the Looking Glass," in which Alice and the White Knight wander through the wood to the gentle *obbligato* of the knight's conversation, as he described all his witty inventions to her ?

Perhaps Alice when she grew up had to study for some Associated Board's Local Examination in Theory. As she stumbled along through many a tangled thicket of overgrown undergrowth her thoughts must often have turned to some of her strange adventures in the earlier and the pleasanter Wonderland.

#### ALLA BREVE—IN THE TIME OF THE BREVE ?

\* \* \* \*

"The name of the song is called 'Haddock's Eyes.'"

"Oh, that is the name of the song, is it?" Alice said, trying to feel interested.

"No, you don't understand," the knight said, looking a little vexed. "That's what the name is *called*. The name really is, 'The Aged, Aged Man.'"

"Then I ought to have said, 'That's what the *song* is called?'"

"No, you oughtn't : that's quite another thing ! The *song* is called 'Ways and Means'—but that's only what it's *called*, you know !"

"Well, what is the *song*, then?" said Alice, who was by this time completely bewildered.

"I was coming to that," the knight said. "The *song* really is, 'A-sitting on a Gate' :—and the tune's my own invention."

\* \* \* \*

I'll tell you everything I can,  
There's little to relate.  
I saw an *alla breve* sign  
A-sitting on a gate.

"What are you, signature," I said,  
"And what is it you mean?"  
And his answer trickled through my head  
Like water in a dream.

\* \* \* \* \*  
And now if e'er by chance I put  
My fingers into glue,  
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot  
Into a left-hand shoe ;  
Or if I drop upon my toe  
A very heavy weight.  
I—weep—for it reminds me so  
Of that old sign I used to know . . . .

ALLA BREVE . . . In the time of the Breve. No, that is only what it is called : its name is *a capella*. But that is only its name, which has no particular sense in it in this connection, which, consequently, no one uses, and which means also "unaccompanied" and various other things. The time really is two minim beats in the bar, and is marked  $\text{C}$ . But  $\text{C}$  is the sign of *four* minim beats, and is occasionally used to denote *four crotchet* beats. Yes, but that is the disadvantage so unfortunately characteristic of her old friend Humpty Dumpty's ingenious "portmanteau" system ; and such "slithy toves" as our present time signatures will "gyre and gimble in the wabe" for many a long day to come, until the "frabjous day" when the whole tribe of unfortunate young students can "chortle in their joy" over a "snicker-snacked" Jabberwocky.

The entire time system, with its concomitant signs, has undergone so many and such radical modifications in the course of the history of music, that we cannot wonder at anomalies in present-day nomenclature. It is so hard to break with the past ; and revolutionaries are ever entreated to be content with reform introduced as gently as possible, so as to spare the feelings of the aged and the respected, whose sympathies are entirely with the past. Although we are at a very unsatisfactory stage in the matter of signature reform, we are on the way to some better and simpler method. In any case, we cannot view with any favour the late Mr. Rockstro's only half-veiled suggestion that we might with profit go back to fifteenth and sixteenth century notation. Mr. Rockstro closes his article on "Time" in Grove's Dictionary by a description of some complicated rhythm effects from the scores of Mozart and Spohr, and with the following passage :—

Yet these complications are simple indeed when compared with those to be found in innumerable compositions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ; triumphs of ingenuity so abstruse that it is doubtful whether any choristers of the present day could master their difficulties, yet all capable of being expressed with absolute certainty by the various forms of Mode, Time, and Prolation invented in the Middle Ages, and based upon the same firm principles as our own Time Table. For all the medieval composers had to do for the purpose of producing what we call Compound Common Time was to combine Imperfect Mode with Perfect Time, or Imperfect Time with the Greater Prolation ; and for Compound Triple Time, Perfect Mode with Perfect Time, or Perfect Time with the Greater Prolation.

Poor Alice ! She finds Compound Triple Time bad enough ; what would she do with a combination of Perfect and Imperfect Modes and Prolations ?

Is the metre of two minim beats in a bar a comparatively new thing, we are tempted to ask, that it is perfectly fitted with some ancestor's title—a young David hampered by Saul's armour. If the predecessor or the ancestor is dead enough, there is no great reason why his spoils should not be worn by his conqueror or his heir. See how the *acciaccatura* has left his uncouth shell and appropriated the more comely dwelling of the late *appoggiatura*. True, he called himself the "short appoggiatura" so long as there was any apprehension of

molestation, but he has grown bolder of late, and usually drops the distinctive "short" as well as the stroke through his tail, which used to disfigure his proportions.

But two-minim time in the bar was as common in Bach's day as it is in ours; and *Alla Breve*—i.e. in "Breve" time—two semibreves in the bar—has an heir in four-minim time ( $\frac{4}{4}$ ) just as closely related to it as is its diminution two minims ( $\frac{2}{2}$ ). There is little doubt that the gradual change which discontinued the long notes at one end of the table (the "Maxima," "Longa," and "Brevis") and added the crotchet, quaver, semiquaver, etc., at the other end, is justification for the contention that two-minim time really represents the old two-semibreve rhythm. But so long as we do not call four-minim time *alla Longa*, and so long as it actually contains the value of and bears the name of the Breve, we ought to call two-minim time *alla semibreve*, or else nothing at all in the way of fancy, pseudo-scientific antiquarian distinction.

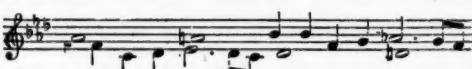
All the confusion in the use of the term *alla breve*, however, is order itself when compared with the hopeless chaos into which  $\mathbb{C}$ ,  $\mathbb{C}$ ,  $\mathbb{C}$ , and  $\frac{4}{4}$  have fallen; and the fruits of a cursory inquiry into the practice of the great masters may prove of interest to the readers of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD, and perhaps help to pave the way for a complete revision of the time signatures in some future edition of the classics. There are occasions on which great composers have used convenient but false notation, even passages which show a want of exactness in "barring."<sup>10</sup> No one would dream of touching these; but surely it would not tread on the tenderest, most patriarchal corns were a distinctive sign added to or substituted for  $\mathbb{C}$ ,  $\mathbb{C}$ , or  $\frac{4}{4}$ , where the metre is evidently two minims. And what better or simpler sign could be found than the natural  $\frac{2}{2}$ ?

Musicians of the time of Bach and Handel were still under the shadow of the older system, which not only permitted, but encouraged the gigantic proportions of Prolation and its troublesome companions. And in the most flagrant cases modern editors have not hesitated to bring the music under proportions more readily grasped. The best-known example is probably, "And with His stripes," which in the original was written in the Great Alla Breve time—i.e. eight minims in a bar—resulting in such passages as—

*Alla Breve.*



and



There is no doubt that many of Handel's bars would be the better for sub-division. Mr. Corder points out that the division of  $\frac{8}{8}$  applied to the favourite  $\frac{12}{8}$  time would correct many passages and prevent a song from ending in the middle of a bar, as so many of them are forced to do.

Taking the works of Bach and Handel as a starting-point, let us see how early was established the metre of two beats in a bar containing notes of the collective value of one semibreve, and how very late it was recognized as demanding a signature of its own. It will be important

to confine our attention to pieces actually written by the composer in time which we would now describe as  $\frac{2}{2}$ .

As the metre and its rhythm are somewhat foreign to the spirit of the older schools of vocal counterpoint,\* we must look in instrumental compositions for the first evidences of  $\frac{2}{2}$  time, and there they are plentiful enough. But an interesting comparison between the effects of  $\frac{2}{2}$  time (with two accents in the bar) and  $\frac{4}{4}$  (with four accents) may be made in the last chorus of *Israel in Egypt*. There the soprano solo opens with eight unaccompanied bars in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time ("Sing ye to the Lord"); when the chorus answers, the character of  $\frac{4}{4}$  is given to the same passage by the accompaniment. The second part of the chorus ("For He hath triumphed") is distinctly in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time. The signature to the whole is  $\mathbb{C}$  *a tempo giusto*. Many of the allegro movements in Handel's overtures are in what we would call two-minim beat metre, but they are all marked  $\mathbb{C}$ .

There can be no doubt at all on the subject of the rhythm and metre of dance movements of the Gavotte and Bourrée class; they all contain the value of one semibreve in each bar, and there are only two accents.

The Bourrée is sometimes supposed to be in four-beat and the Gavotte in two-beat time, and a perusal of the following definitions must tend to considerable confusion in the student's mind. It is natural enough, although it seems extraordinary to the lay mind uninterested in party politics, that a Reuter's telegram of three lines is read by a newspaper of one party as a triumphant vindication of British power and a high-handed challenge to the world, while another newspaper sees in the same bald dispatch only decadence, truckling to foreign influence, and a betrayal of British honour. But passion and prejudice should not colour the vision of an historian studying the form of Gavotte and Bourrée, of which there are numerous enough examples extant. Yet it is possible in a short half-hour to find various contradictory and even self-contradictory definitions among the writings of recognized authorities—

Gavotte, a quick dance in *duplet* time (two minims to the bar).  
Bourrée, a lively dance in *duplet* ( $\frac{2}{2}$ ) time.

Prout's "Applied Forms."

Gavotte, in *common time*, moderately quick.  
Bourrée, distinguished from Gavotte by being in *alla breve* time—that is, with only two beats in the bar, whereas the Gavotte has four.

Grove's Dictionary (and signed E. P. I.).

Gavotte, in *alla breve* time  $\frac{2}{2}$ .

Bourrée in  $\frac{4}{4}$  time.—Riemann's Dictionary.

Gavotte, in  $\frac{4}{4}$  time.

Bourrée, in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time. More flowing than the Gavotte.

"Longman's Music Course" (Bertenshaw).

Bach's Bourrée in B minor (from the 2nd Violin Sonata) is published as a transcription by Saint-Saëns and called Gavotte!

One thing is very clear amid all this confusion, that in the Gavottes and Bourrées familiar to every pianist there are only two accents in the bar, and the signature ought therefore in all cases to be  $\frac{2}{2}$ .

It was no hesitation in accepting the minim as a unit of beat which prevented the old masters from recognizing it in the so-called *alla breve* signature.  $\frac{2}{2}$  is common enough both in Handel's and in Bach's compositions. But never does the signature  $\frac{2}{2}$  appear in Handel's works, and it occurs only four times in the entire range of Bach's compositions. In the sixth Sonata (E major) for Violin, and in the second and third Sonatas for Violin and Clavier

\* Choruses like "The earth swallowed them," and "Thou sentest forth Thy wrath" (*Israel in Egypt*) are in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time, marked " $\mathbb{C}$ , *alla breve*"; but that is not likely to have been the signature of their originals in Erba's *Magnificat*.

\* Cf. Prout's "Musical Form," § 37.

(A major and E major) it appears as 2. The Allegro in the first Sonata for Violin and Clavier (B minor) is in the same rhythm; the signature is  $\frac{2}{2}$ . These are evidently survivals from the old system of signatures, distinguishing Perfect (three in the bar) from Imperfect time (two in the bar) in those dark hours before the dawn of modern music.

Perfect Time.  Imperfect Time. 

This use of 2 in the signature of the identical rhythm in question is another of the grand old genius's marvellous prophecies of future practice; it is not till after Beethoven's time that we find it re-appearing in classical scores. And however desirable it be that the unit beat should be indicated in the signature, there is no doubt that a simple 2, 3, or 4, to indicate how many beats there are in the bar, leaving the player to see what kind of notes form the beat, would be on the whole easier to understand than  $\frac{2}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{2}$ , and  $\frac{4}{2}$  for two beats, three beats, and four beats respectively.

Merely mentioning that fugues which occur in the "Forty-eight" in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time are signed  $\frac{2}{2}$ , a signature which stands in the ninth Fugue of the second book for  $\frac{2}{2}$ , while C and  $\frac{2}{2}$  are used apparently indiscriminately in Nos. I. to V., also in VIII., and XIV. of the "Kunst der Fuge," we may go on to consider the signatures used for the best known Gavottes and Bourrées. The great majority are signed  $\frac{2}{2}$ ; but the Gavotte in the Sixth Violin Sonata is signed C, and the Bourrée, as already mentioned, merely 2. In the Violoncello Sonatas the fourth has the first Bourrée in  $\frac{2}{2}$ , and the second in C; the same anomaly occurs in the sixth with its first Gavotte in  $\frac{2}{2}$  and its second in C.

For the Clavier Concerto in D



the signature is  $\frac{2}{2}$ , while the D minor concerto



is signed C.

The real *alla breve* time (four minims in a bar) seems to be conveyed in the double-barred C ( $\frac{2}{2}$ ) in the "St. Ann's" Fugue and a few Organ "Vorspiele." Neither this sign nor the single barred C seems to have any influence on the speed. (See the *Grave* Fantasia in G for Organ.)

We may conclude then that in Bach's eyes C usually, but by no means invariably, meant two minim beats in the bar; and also that a plain C did not necessarily indicate that two minims in the bar was *not* the metre employed.

The *alla breve* metre does not occur in Haydn's piano-forte compositions (he uses it very frequently in his symphonies), and the signature C serves appropriately for all his  $\frac{2}{2}$  movements. (Very frequently in these compositions, as in those of later writers, we find a  $\frac{4}{2}$  movement which would more appropriately bear the signature  $\frac{2}{2}$ .)

Mozart, in his piano-forte compositions, uses the  $\frac{2}{2}$  metre oftener than Haydn does. He is usually careful to mark it  $\frac{2}{2}$ ; but the *Allegro* of the great Fantasia in C minor does not change its signature from the C of the introductory adagio, and the Sonata in C minor, which is usually attached to the Fantasia, finds C quite sufficient

for its strong  $\frac{2}{2}$  character. There is considerable laxity of purpose also in the use of C and  $\frac{2}{2}$  in the fine piano-forte duets. It is difficult to see why the allegretto Thema in B $\flat$  with variations should be distinguished by the C sign.



The variations (1-10) are all marked  $\frac{2}{2}$  until No. 11 brings *adagio* tempo, which the composer has indicated C. All, however, are alike in  $\frac{2}{2}$  time.

The "Jupiter" Symphony is a noble example of the stately character  $\frac{2}{2}$  can assume, but it is signed C. The passionate rush of the G minor Symphony is as distinctly in *duo* time, and yet it also bears C as its signature. The finales of both of these symphonies are indicated  $\frac{2}{2}$ ; and it may have been the *character* of the first movements, and the fact that, although fast, they are not so fast as the *Allegro molto* and the *Allegro assai* of their last movements that led Mozart to make the distinction—if, indeed, the matter cost him a single thought.

Both Haydn and Mozart were, however, more careful in this matter than their greater heir and successor. One can imagine an unlucky writer of theoretical books pointing out to Beethoven that C was hardly the correct signature for the *Adagio* of the C $\sharp$  minor Sonata, and can see that crushing frown and hear that voice of thunder as it roars: "Who forbids it? I allow it!"

We need not go in any detail into Beethoven's use of the signatures for *alla breve* time, but only point out that, among others, the first sonata (F minor), and the seventh (D major) are marked C; while the third (C major), ninth (E major), eleventh (B $\flat$  major), last movement of the thirteenth (C $\sharp$  minor), seventeenth (D minor), twenty-first (C major), and twenty-eighth (B $\flat$ ), are marked C; while slow movements with four distinct beats in the bar, like No. 13 (E $\flat$  major: *Andante*), and 14 (C $\sharp$  minor: *Adagio sostenuto*), are marked  $\frac{2}{2}$ . In his symphonies, C suffices for the *Allegros* of Nos. 1 and 2; the mighty swing of the Finale to the C minor; the outburst of the storm in the Pastoral; and the triumphal Song to Joy in the Choral. C is used only in two movements—the *Allegro* of the fourth, and at the end of the Finale in the ninth (*Allegro ma non tanto* and *Prestissimo*).

Later writers become more careful, and although the sign  $\frac{2}{2}$  is not used, the indication of *minim*, not *crotchet*, beats, which has come to be the significance of the term *alla breve* and its sign C, is rarely wanting. Notable exceptions in important works are Schumann's Fantasia in C (second movement), "Er der Herrlichste," and several other songs and choruses. The last movement of the Second Symphony (C major) is marked C in a careful Thematic Index (Schubert-Leipzig), but the orchestral score has the proper sign C. Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," and "Priest's March" (from *Athalie*) are signed C—a signature which, like a willing horse, bears many a heavy burden.

It is when we come to the works of Wagner's second period that we find the proper sign for two-minim beats in a bar— $\frac{2}{2}$ —systematically adopted. The *Rienzi* overture still calls it C. The *Flying Dutchman* uses C

more carefully, but the "Steersman's Song" is marked  $\text{C}$  (it appears in the introduction to Act II. under  $\text{C}$ ), as are many other *alla breve* numbers in the same opera—e.g. the finale to Act III.

The distinction between  $\text{C}$  and  $\text{C}$  is carefully maintained throughout *Tannhäuser*, although the march, which is surely in four-beat time, is marked  $\text{C}$ .

In the *Meistersinger* (which one is always tempted to treat as a work earlier than *Tristan*) the sign  $\frac{2}{3}$  is thrice used—for 48 bars in Act II., and for 73 bars, and later for 44 bars in Act III., in all 165 bars. An interesting point is that Wagner has not only discarded  $\text{C}$  entirely, but always uses the sign  $\frac{4}{3}$ , not  $\text{C}$ . How inconsistent even Wagner is—or, perhaps, we should say how impossible it is to lay down hard and fast rules on the subject—may be seen in the introduction to Act III., which is in  $\frac{2}{3}$  time, but is marked  $\frac{4}{3}$ , probably for convenience in beating time. The same applies to the  $\frac{2}{3}$  Chorale in the first scene of Act I., where the interludes are in  $\frac{4}{3}$  time, and the whole is therefore signed  $\frac{4}{3}$ . The Chorale in the last act, which occurs in the introduction, and is sung in the last scene, is marked  $\frac{4}{3}$  instead of  $\frac{2}{3}$ . The bar which occurs in both passages, and which contains six crotchets, is not marked  $\frac{2}{3}$  (as it should be if  $\frac{2}{3}$  is correct), but  $\frac{4}{3}$ —and thus we notice that  $\frac{2}{3}$  and  $\frac{4}{3}$  mean very much the same to Wagner.

In the first act of *Tristan*, which will suffice for illustration, the signature does not change more than a dozen times during the kaleidoscopic scene.  $\frac{4}{3}$  is used for purely recitative bars, and also in many passages which are really  $\frac{2}{3}$ .  $\frac{2}{3}$  varied by  $\frac{3}{2}$  is the prevailing sign.  $\frac{3}{2}$  only occurs twice (besides two quotations from the  $\frac{3}{2}$ -time prelude), and  $\frac{1}{2}$  is used somewhat unnecessarily in one bar.

In the last act of *Siegfried*—to take another act at random— $\frac{2}{3}$  only occupies the last four pages of the score (largely due to the phrases of crotchets in triplets), doubtless because  $\frac{4}{3}$  has reigned throughout the scene, serving for four and two beats in the bar as desired.  $\frac{2}{3}$  is usually referred to its simpler form  $\frac{3}{2}$  in a double sign— $\frac{2}{3}, \frac{3}{2}$ , which at first sight looks like the nightmare of a signature!

In the whole of *Parsifal*  $\frac{2}{3}$  only occurs once—at the opening of the second act, and the whole passage there marked  $\frac{2}{3}$  occurs again during the act under  $\frac{4}{3}$  signature. In the last act the  $\frac{4}{3}$  signature occupies four-fifths of the score, a large proportion of the remainder being taken up with the lovely "Blumenane" scene in  $\frac{2}{3}$  time.

It is very difficult to bring to any logical conclusion a paper which has covered so much ground in such a cursory way, and which has presented the confusion in practice at every turn. Still more difficult is it to make any practical suggestion. Several suggestions might be made, as several have been made at various times by various authorities, but up till now with little or no avail. I take the liberty of quoting a few sentences from a letter I received on the subject from one of the very highest authorities—

"The very essence of the  $\frac{2}{3}$  signature is that the beats are half-notes and not quarter-notes. It is not so much a question of the  $\frac{2}{3}$  instead of  $\text{C}$ ; both mean the same thing, and it does not matter how it is written, although I prefer  $\frac{2}{3}$  as clearer. . . . I would simply define *alla breve* time (whether  $\text{C}$ ,  $\frac{2}{3}$ , or  $\frac{3}{2}$ ) as 'that in which the beats are half-notes.' This is clear, simple, and comprehensive."

It is clear, simple, and comprehensive, and it is to be desired that a general understanding could be arrived at which would act retrospectively as well as for the future,

and to which future editions, as well as future compositions, would comply. In that case, we could throw  $\frac{2}{3}$  if not also its companion  $\text{C}$  overboard, and further simplify matters by letting one sign— $\frac{2}{3}$ —stand for one thing.

But if we find a mind like Wagner's use at first  $\text{C}$  and  $\text{C}$  indifferently; then adopt  $\frac{2}{3}$  for *alla breve* metre; and finally fall back on the all-embracing  $\frac{4}{3}$ , where are we to look for definite leading?

We read of discussions and proposals about the relative merits of "English" and "Continental" fingering. That is a matter of very little importance: the one is as *correct* as the other, and as people gain sense they will adopt the more sensible. But this matter admits of proof. All our signs have some particular meaning and no other. We have stretched the meaning of *alla breve* until it has hardly enough elasticity left to recover its original meaning. But if we decide to keep it, let us restrict it to one meaning, and do not let us apply it to  $\frac{2}{3}$ ,  $\frac{3}{2}$ ,  $\frac{4}{3}$ ,  $\text{C}$ , and  $\text{C}$  indifferently. For youth is fleeting, time is short, and the signature of all our lives is

ALLA BREVE.

FRANKLIN PETERSON.

#### LETTER FROM LEIPZIG.

ON Thursday, May 24th, the Riedel Verein gave a performance in St. Thomas's Church, in which works by living composers exclusively were brought to a hearing. It was Herr Heinrich v. Herzogenberg, Carl Piatti, and Signor Enrico Bossi who were thus honoured, their works filling up an unfortunately too long concert. Of the first-named, we heard his Psalm cxvi. (Op. 34), which is interesting chiefly on account of the contrapuntal art therein, whilst as regards the invention it leaves much to be desired on the score of originality and impressiveness. Deep earnestness of artistic intention speaks to us also from the two sacred songs for soprano, violin, and organ, but in them also is felt the want of welling fancy, whilst the addition of the obbligato violin seems to us in no way suitable for the purpose. These songs lie obviously too high for Frl. von Roden; she succeeded much better in the two sacred songs by Piatti—"Herr, ich lasse nicht von Dir," and "Empor die Herzen," which also pleased us better, as compositions, than the others. The same composer's vigorous and clearly worked-out organ sonata, No. 2, in E minor, also gave proof of his talents, and Herr Homeyer gave it its full effect. A "Sanctus" and "Benedictus" for solo and chorus, by Enrico Bossi, made, on the whole, no unfavourable impression, while his "Cantate Domine" for choir and organ was, on account of the manifold strivings after effect and the operatic style predominating, not adapted to prejudice us in favour of the composer. Indeed, we do not understand why this foreigner has been preferred before so many native composers, who would have been much worthier of consideration. The concert was conducted by Dr. Göhler, as Professor Kretzschmar is still, unfortunately, not fully restored to health.

Not much more productive of enjoyment was the concert of the Bach Verein, which took place on the 1st of June, in memory of Brahms. It opened with a very successful reproduction of the *Stabat Mater* of Emanuele d'Astorga. If it is not to be denied that the work has a wearisome effect, as its mood remains always the same—elegiac—yet the old master must be praised for excellent treatment of the chorus, and melody noble throughout. Herr Julius Klengel then delighted the public (who received him with loud applause) by the performance of three pieces from the violoncello suite in D minor, by J. S. Bach. The severest critic could have nothing to find fault with in the genuinely artistic rendering, but yet we could have wished that the respected artist had not despised a pianoforte accompaniment! It makes one nervous, at last, if one hears throughout ten to fifteen minutes only indicated basses. The second part contained the quartet for piano and strings, in G minor, and "Nänie" for chorus and orchestra, by Brahms. The former was played in a distinguished manner by Herren Fritz von Bose, Paul Klengel, Hans Sitt, and

Julius Klengel, and received, of course, the liveliest applause. The concluding item was the choral work just named, which, as also the *Stabat Mater*, was excellently performed under Capellmeister Sitt's direction. Herr von Bose, as well as Herr Julius Klengel, was heard the next day at a charity concert. Both artists united in an excellent reproduction of Beethoven's Sonata in A major, Op. 69, while the former had chosen as a solo the interesting Variations (Op. 16) by Paderewski, and the latter played the insipid "Berceuse" by Godard, and Platti's pretty, merry "Tarantelle." The concert concluded with Stephan Krehl's "Slovenische Tänze," for pianoforte duet. There was besides an almost superabundant collection of songs heard.

At the theatre, the Italian tenor Tamagno has been acting Manrico in Verdi's *Trovatore*. Thanks to industrious puffing for several weeks, the house was well filled in spite of the rise in prices. Tamagno has some brilliant high notes at his command, but his vocal art leaves much to be desired, and also the tone of his voice in the middle and lower registers is unsympathetic.

An operatic novelty was also given us lately—*Dubrowsky*, an opera in four acts, by Napravnik, the principal Capellmeister, as is well known, at the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg. As such he has of course gained a certain acquaintance with the stage, and knows what creates effect. But on this very account, because he has now brought together all that has created an effect in other operas, one is put out of humour in his by the design being too apparent. Thus, then, even the second representation was already very poorly attended, and the applause but slight. Like all modern opera composers, Nepravnik commands an orchestra of gorgeous colouring, to which the voices, willing or unwilling, must accommodate themselves, and his motives and phrases, mostly founded on chromatics, are almost universally of distinction, but real melodies are extremely seldom to be met with, and when this does happen they are either Russian national or trivial Italian ones. Happily the last two acts are, from a musical point of view, of more importance than the first two, and the singing lesson in the third act in especial (which nevertheless reminds one strongly of the *Barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Fille du Régiment*) offers delightful music. A cardinal error is the too heavy scoring and the misuse of the brass, which is dragged in at the most indifferent scenes, and drowns the voices. This extraordinarily difficult opera—in which, moreover, the "Intermezzo sinfonico" is not wanting—was excellently given, Frl. Dönges and the recently-engaged tenor, Herr Moers, especially distinguishing themselves by manifest devotion to the exacting tasks allotted to them. Herr Schütz, as Trojekuroff, also deserves praise, as well as the representatives of the too many, in part quite unnecessary, episodical figures—Herren Schelper, Marion, Immelmann, Neldel; Frl. Beuer and Osborne. Choir and orchestra also did excellently under the able direction of Capellmeister Panzner.

There still remains to mention another Brahms memorial celebration, got up by the Leipzig "Kammermusik-Verein." It was only a pity that the choice of pieces to be performed fell throughout on such as decidedly belong to the less happy creations of the deceased master; namely, Trio for pianoforte, clarinet, and 'cello; Quartet No. 3 in C minor, for pianoforte and strings; and "Wiegenlied," for contralto with viola obbligato. The rendering of all these was, although not perfect, yet thoroughly praiseworthy.

#### OUR MUSIC PAGES.

"NUTS and Nettles," given as this month's supplement, comes from Mr. Moffat's new book of Action Songs, "Merry Mimic Measures" (Edition No. 8929), and is one of those for which Mr. Oxenford has furnished both words and actions. Quite a little pocket drama it is, too! Or, for those who love a pessimistic view, an allegory of life. There is the cheerful start, the sanguine desire and confident determination to win treasure (aren't nuts as "coveted possessions" to children as honours or wealth to their elders?), the difficulties in the way, the valiant attempt to leap over them, the painful failure, the discon-

solate withdrawal—there you have the whole thing in a nutshell!

It should not be difficult to get appropriate expression even from the smallest child, especially in the tragic (?) climax where the nettles maliciously spoil the nutting expedition, and cause an ignominious retreat to be beaten in full and tantalizing view of the unattainable fruit—"so near and yet so far away." For few children exist who haven't been, on some occasion or other, stung by nettles, so that at least a highly realistic effect ought to be attained when they

"Cry o-o-o-h! cry o-o-o-h! for nettles!"

#### Reviews of New Music and New Editions.

*Gregorian Music. An Outline of Musical Palaeography*, illustrated by facsimiles of ancient manuscripts by the Benedictines of Stanbrook. London and Leamington Art and Book Co.

A VERY presentable, well-got-up, and handsome publication, intended, as says the preface, as "an attempt to bring under the notice of English readers some results of recent researches in musical archaeology;" "only a résumé of the *Paléographie Musicale* . . . to convey a fair idea of the scope of that remarkable work." Use has also been made "of Don F. Pothier's 'Mélodies Grégoriennes,' a work which has opened up vast fields for the study of Plain-Chant by placing it on a scientific basis." But it is not merely an exhaust of the foregoing works. The author expresses his thanks to Dom. A. Mocquereau, the able editor of the *Paléographie Musicale*, for much kind encouragement and assistance, and especially for putting at his disposal two admirable papers ("La Psalmodie Romaine et l'accent tonique latin"; "L'Art Grégorien, son but, ses procédés, ses caractères"), from which he has drawn freely. Two ambiguous passages in the preface may be called attention to: the Augustine sent by Pope Gregory the Great is not the well-known bishop of Hippo, but a much later monk of that name; St. Augustine of Hippo died nearly two centuries before the missionary to the Anglo-Saxons. Tunstede, a writer on mensural music, middle of the fourteenth century, should be named after Walter Odington (thirteenth century) instead of before him.

The author passes in silence over the attempts to overthrow the old tradition of St. Gregory the Great being the first organizer of Roman Church song; the name of the book, "Gregorian Music," shows that the author still holds to the "Gregorian tradition"! The document of the Synod of Cloveshoe (747), which first mentions a book of noted ecclesiastical cantilenes, "quod scriptum de romana habemus ecclesia," is regarded by Fr. A. Gevaert, in his famous pamphlet "Les origines du chant liturgique de l'église latine," as proving the organization of the Church song of the Roman Church by Gregory II. or Gregory III., both of the eighth century. The author, in opposition to that opinion, sees in it a confirmation of the existence of such noted Antiphonaries and Martyrologies since a longer time.

Seven very well done photographic facsimiles, illustrating the various forms of neumatic notation in the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, open the work. The text includes ten chapters, bearing the headings: (1) The Aim of Church Music; (2) "La Paléographie Musicale"; (3) The Origin of Neumatic Writing; (4) Diastematic Notation; (5) Liquescent Neums; (6) Romanian Signs and Letters; (7) Rhythm; (8) The "Cursus"; (9) Adaptation

of Texts; (10) Execution. An Appendix gives two short treatises on the Church modes and on psalmody in general.

The first chapter touches a deep psychological problem with much ability. We quote a passage of it which is very worthy of attention: "Speech is but broken light on the depth of the unspoken, music is a mystical illumination of those depths which the rays of language are too feeble to reach. While the achievement of language is to chisel into articulate permanence a clearly defined thought, the mission of music is to give vent to such passions or *inspirations*, such imaginings or such *realities* as are too subtle or too *mighty*, too dreamy or too *spiritual* to be imprisoned within the thinkable forms of logic. Though necessarily less precise than speech, this is not by reason of the vagueness, but by reason of the vastness of its meaning, which thereby becomes proportionately overwhelming. While language is the crystallization of emotions from which the vital essence has escaped, and words by defining *limit*, music is a revelation of the illimitable which lies behind all the barriers of time." This short passage shows that the author is a very thoughtful musician and a philosopher too.

Chapters 3 and 4 give a very well done *résumé* of the history of neumatic notation; Chapter 5 adds a clear explanation of the liquefiant ending tones of composed neums according to Don Pothier's lucid researches; Chapter 6 maintains the Notkerian elucidation of the so-called Romanian letters which are to be found in a great number of the older manuscripts with neumatic notation.

The whole book is a very clever and practical digest of the latest and best writings on Gregorian chant. The chapters on Rhythm (7), Cursus (8), and Adaptation of Texts (9), in especial constitute an introduction to the study of the far-reaching investigations of the monumental Palaeography of the Solesmes Benedictines, showing the simplest forms of musical recitation in the older Ambrosian psalmody, and the successive increase of ornamentation in the cadences.

In the tenth chapter (Execution) some good hints are to be found, partly for singers, partly for organists who undertake an harmonic accompaniment of Gregorian chants (p. 77): "The best accompaniment, that which fully bears out its name, does not aim at leading the voices in an obtrusive manner, still less at drowning them in its magnificence. It is content to give a sympathetic support to the singers, and to suggest more than it expresses." It is generally agreed that in accompanying Plain-Song the harmonies should be founded on the diatonic scale. Chromatic progressions are absolutely foreign to the Gregorian melody, and rob it of many of its strongest and most beautiful effects," etc.

The printing of the book is of the best, the types of the Plain-Song notes being an accurate imitation of those used by the Benedictines of Solesmes.

DR. HUGO RIEMANN.

*Twenty of the most Noteworthy Studies for the Pianoforte.* By A. SCHMITT. Selected and edited by DR. H. HENKEL. (Edition No. 6379; net, 2s.) London: Augener & Co.

ALOYS SCHMITT's fame rests almost entirely on his "Preparatory Exercises" and the book of studies, Op. 16, though it is difficult to understand why this should be the case while such admirable studies as those included in the present collection (which in some respects even surpass Op. 16) remain in the background. It may be asserted with confidence that, whether judged

from a technical or a musical point of view, their value to the moderately-advanced student is equally apparent. The new edition of twenty selected studies has undergone careful revision by Dr. H. Henkel of Frankfort-on-the-Main, an esteemed pupil of Aloys Schmitt. Teachers will readily appreciate the importance of these useful studies.

*Album of Studies.* A collection of a hundred studies for the Pianoforte, selected from the works of J. S. Bach, Bertini, Clementi, Cramer, Czerny, Handel, Hummel, Loeschhorn, J. Schmitt, and Steibelt, arranged in progressive order from the elementary up to an advanced stage of technical execution, edited and revised by R. Kleinmichel. Book III., containing Studies 51 to 75. Book IV., containing Studies 76 to 100. (Edition Nos. 6193c, d; net, 2s. each.) London: Augener & Co.

THE two volumes of pianoforte studies now before us complete the collection of a hundred selected studies noticed in last month's number of the MUSICAL RECORD. They comprise many of the best known studies by Cramer, Clementi (*Gradus ad Parnassum*), Czerny (*Fingerfertigkeit*), Bertini, with an occasional prelude by Bach and a piece by Handel (gigue, courante, variations, etc.) familiar to every player and teacher of the pianoforte who knows anything of the standard works composed for his instrument.

*Polka a Capriccio pour le Piano.* Par FRITZ KIRCHNER. Op. 715. London: Augener & Co.

ANOTHER bright and playful piece in Kirchner's usual style. It claims a passing word on account of its tunefulness and freedom from technical difficulty—points which will make it acceptable as a recreative piece for young players.

*Vocal Works by Great Masters, transcribed for the Pianoforte.* By E. PAUER.—W. A. MOZART. "Separation and Reunion." London: Augener & Co.

IT is gratifying to note that, although retired from active duty, Professor Ernst Pauer still employs his talent on work which has ever been attractive to him, and which is associated with his name throughout the musical world. The song by Mozart—"Separation and Reunion"—is the latest addition to a series of masterpieces of the great song-writers, transcribed for the pianoforte. Mr. Pauer gives a faithful version of the original composition, wisely refraining from adding variations or embellishments likely to detract from the native charm of such songs as this one. In its new dress it will be found an excellent study in style, and a taking pianoforte solo as well.

*Symphonies.* By W. A. MOZART. Arranged as Pianoforte Duets by MAX PAUER. No. 8 in D major; No. 9 in D major; No. 10 in C major. (Edition Nos. 8584*h*, i, k; net, 1s. each.) London: Augener & Co.

WITH regard to this new edition of Mozart's symphonies arranged as pianoforte duets, we can only reiterate what has already been said. The setting is in every way worthy of Mr. Max Pauer's musical reputation, and always leaves a very satisfactory impression of the composition on the hearer's mind. There is no redundancy of notes here; on the contrary, these arrangements are strictly on the lines of Mozart's original works for the pianoforte, and yet it is astonishing how full and brilliant many of the movements sound. Curiously enough, there are but three movements to each of the symphonies Nos. 9 and 10 (the *minuetto* being absent in both), while in symphony No. 8 we find two *minuettos* (one before and one after the middle *Andante*), making five movements in all,

besides the introductory *Adagio* to the finale *Allegro assai*. We need not impress upon the teacher the fact that these symphonies are invaluable to the scholar as material for sight-reading, and the first practice in ensemble playing, they having for many years past served these purposes with great results.

*Hiawathan Sketches*. For Violin and Pianoforte. By S. COLERIDGE-TAYLOR. Op. 16. (Edition No. 7356; net, 2s.) London : Augener & Co.

THREE sketches for violin and pianoforte, founded on lines taken from Longfellow's poem, deserve words of warmest commendation, for they combine in no small degree originality of idea with a thoroughly musical treatment of the themes. The titles of the three movements are : a tale, a song, and a dance, and all of them—especially the first—will, doubtless, find many admirers amongst the violin-playing community. They are not difficult of execution, although the violin part goes into the high positions, and double stopping occurs in many places. We congratulate the composer on his clever work, and wish him every success.

*Twenty-four Daily Exercises in all Keys and Positions for the Violoncello*. By J. J. F. DOTZAUER. Newly revised, with Fingering and Bowing by OSKAR BRÜCKNER. (Edition No. 7770; net, 2s. 6d.) London : Augener & Co.

VIOLONCELLO students are indebted to Oskar Brückner for an excellent edition of this celebrated work by Dotzauer, the famous violoncello virtuoso and composer. The work is of a purely technical character, consisting of twenty-four exercises in all keys and positions, each one preceded by the scale with various bowings. The directions as to the manner of study, etc., are given in French, German, and English, and we can testify to the fact that everything has been done to render the new edition an attractive one to students. The exercises are intended only for advanced players.

*John Sebastian Bach*. A lecture. By SEDLEY TAYLOR, M.A. Cambridge : Macmillan & Bowes. THE full title of this little book, "The Life of John Sebastian Bach in Relation to his Work as a Church Musician and Composer," sufficiently explains its scope, and although Mr. Taylor in his Preface modestly makes no claims to anything more than a compilation from Spitta's large biography, it is so well written and well put together, and keeps so strictly to the end in view, as to throw a most interesting side-light on the life of the great composer. Bach's work as an organist and as Cantor of St. Thomas's are specially dwelt on, and attention drawn in particular to his Church cantatas, which Mr. Taylor justly designates a "still almost untouched mine of musical wealth."

## Our Letter from the Opera.

*The Foyer, Covent Garden Theatre.* June 21st, 1897.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Surely everyone is now beginning to wonder what madness possesses the Grand Opera Syndicate, Limited, from which we all expected such mighty things. It started out under certain disadvantages, it is true; but it also had exceptional opportunities; and it has thrown away the opportunities with a cheerful carelessness that simply deprives one of breath. It has made promises as readily as it has broken them—and

more cannot be said about its readiness to make them. It promised *Tristan* twice, and gave other operas; it promised *Die Meistersinger* twice, and gave other operas. It has since then substituted *Les Huguenots* or *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Tristan* for *Siegfried*. Now *Tristan* is as fine an opera as *Siegfried*, and most of us would probably hear the one as contentedly as the other; but the point is, if a performance of *Siegfried* was never seriously contemplated for Friday, why in Heaven's name announce it, and if it was really contemplated, why change *Siegfried* for *Tristan* merely because *Tristan* was a great success? Finally, it has just given *Siegfried* on the eve of Jubilee Day—on a night, that is, when the streets were well-nigh impassable to man and beast. The result of this charming way of doing things must already have been observed by at least some of my readers. The public has, to a large extent, lost faith in the Syndicate; and there is no longer the old rush for tickets when a noble work is announced to be sung by a fine cast. Last year neither love nor money would procure a seat for *Tristan*; every stall was disposed of days before at considerably above the usual high price. And this year, when *Tristan* was first announced, the whole house was sold out within a few hours. When it was ultimately given, after being announced three times, there were stalls and boxes going a-begging. Again, *The Valkyrie* has always been reckoned a big draw; but many of the ordinary Wagner audience suspiciously stayed away from the first performance; and though the house would not in average circumstances be called a bad one, it was not a good one for such an opera given with such a cast. Tonight it has given *Siegfried* to one of the meanest houses I remember. In fact, it is becoming probable that if the opera continues to be run on the present haphazard, don't-care-twopence-for-anybody lines, this is the last season we shall have until Mr. Maurice Grau or some other competent person takes it in hand. Little as the ordinary impresario can be loved, he is certainly preferable to a management of dilettantes who care no more for art than the ordinary impresario, and have neither his business tact nor his desire to please the public. The dilettantes wish only to please the subscribers. If I were the management, and an aged subscriber begged me to put on *Les Huguenots* instead of *Figaro*, I should give him five shillings to go to the Empire or Alhambra, where he would see the same thing infinitely better done. But the present management eagerly seizes the chance to put on the bad opera—the principal result being that scarcely anyone excepting the aged subscriber comes, and there seems hardly enough money in the theatre to pay the wages of the combined gasman and money-taker who secures the special Covent Garden sunset and twilight effects in *The Valkyrie*. A few houses of this description will be found to spell ruin; and it is sincerely to be hoped that the aged subscriber will put his aged hand in his aged pocket and do something handsome for the Syndicate if it collapses in consequence of its unheroic efforts to please him. I sincerely regret the necessity of telling the truth about this matter. There are many things I would do for Mr. Higgins and Mr. Forsyth. It would give me the greatest pleasure in life, for instance, to swear that the earth was flat. But no self-respecting critic can afford to stultify himself by pretending not to see what no one can now help seeing only too plainly. I promised last month to give my humble views as to the permanence of the Syndicate. Well, they are given here; and I only trust they may prove erroneous.

Having aired my views, let me proceed to the more congenial and pleasanter task of chronicling as accurately

and briefly as possible the more important events of the last month. These are, first, the representation of *The Valkyrie*, second, the representation of *Tristan*, and third, that of *Siegfried*. Although *Die Meistersinger* was first announced, it is, so far as the bills show, still in the dim future. *The Valkyrie* was given with an exceptionally powerful cast—or rather with a cast that would be reckoned exceptional anywhere save at Covent Garden; for, with all its faults—and surely I insist upon them strongly enough—we do get at Covent Garden combinations of singers such as can be heard nowhere else in the world. Yet the performance could not be called anything better than a middling one. Van Dyck, able actor though he is, was so wonderfully and fearfully prosaic and declamatory in the first act, and made so little use of the many opportunities of showing what he could do with purely lyrical music, that the whole of the earlier scenes became just a trifle wearisome. Miss Susan Strong, too, was stiff and wooden, and sang with anything rather than her old freshness and spontaneity. Mr. Lemprière Pringle had far too heavy a part in *Hunding*. I would not be understood to underrate this gentleman: he is in his way excellent, and when he has had considerably more experience will doubtless do first-rate work; but for the present it is fair neither to him nor to his colleagues to turn him on to such an immensely difficult character as *Hunding*. The orchestra, also, throughout the first act was distinctly poor. It seemed never to occur to Mr. Seidl that as the music here is very much broken up, it was his duty to get all possible smoothness into the playing of it. He took it, so to speak, just as it came; and the result was the most scrappy and hand-to-mouth rendering I remember. However, in the second act things went much more satisfactorily. Mr. Bispham, while overdoing many things, yet managed to get a great deal of dignity into his impersonation of *Wotan*; and his singing was fine throughout. The Fricka, Madame Schumann-Heink, was not very pleasing; but Miss Marie Brema, as *Brunhilde*, after the initial mistake of coming on too coquettishly, managed her part with admirable tact. The depth of feeling she threw into the music of the great scene with *Siegmund* produced one of the finest interpretations of that scene ever given. Unfortunately, it was somewhat weakened by the careless stage-management, and by the inessential noises made by bells and whistles behind the scenes that prevented one following the actors and music with proper attention. Much of the last act was as well done as ever it has been done before; but here again the stage-management interfered to hinder one from carrying away a pleasing impression. The fire was dreadfully late; and poor Mr. Bispham appeared the picture of despair as he called "Loge, Loge," and no *Loge* came. Still the singing of both Mr. Bispham and Miss Brema was so supremely beautiful and touching that they partly atoned for these mistakes, and made it unnecessary for one to condemn the representation altogether. If the stage-management had been a little more adroit this performance would have been one of Covent Garden's greatest triumphs.

The performance of *Tristan* a day or two later undoubtedly was one of Covent Garden's greatest triumphs. And it need scarcely be added that the triumph was chiefly due to Jean de Reszke, who has now attained to a degree of perfection in the part of *Tristan* that must be nearly incredible to those who have not seen and heard it. The ordinary "star" operatic tenor has nearly as much to answer for as the *prima donna*; and Jean himself has often, it must be admitted, sinned against art; but certainly all his sins must be forgiven him for bringing into the English

repertory so stupendous an achievement as *Tristan* (and also, it should be remembered, that the production of *Tristan* was for many years an ambition of the late Sir Augustus, who died, I believe, on the very night of the first triumph). Though Jean sang as wonderfully as ever, and acted better than he has acted before, the same cannot be said of any of the other characters save Miss Brema. Mr. Bispham, I regret to say, has come back from America with a lamentable tendency to exaggeration. His gestures are often too violent, there are too many of them, and they are made at wrong times. For instance, his outburst of weeping when *Tristan* dies was both superfluous and entirely out of keeping with the part of *Kurwenal*. The one thing *Kurwenal* would not do in the circumstances would be to weep. Besides this, it distracted one's attention from *Isolde*, who, after *Tristan's* death, becomes the character to whom the carrying out of the drama is chiefly entrusted. I could give other instances—one would be his interview with *Isolde* in the first act; and it is devoutly to be hoped that this magnificent artist will watch himself and cure himself of so bad a habit. The *Isolde*—Miss Sedlmair, a lady from Vienna—was not nearly strong enough for the part. She did it in the first act as a ballet girl might have done it. She wept and sobbed and pouted and whined upon *Brangaena's* shoulder until it was impossible to imagine that this was the passionate queen who proposed presently to poison *Tristan*; and then she shook her fist and made faces at the part of the awning behind which she supposed *Tristan* to be standing, with a pretty affectation of violence that made her lack of dignity more sadly apparent than ever. However, in the second act she sang with a great deal of charm and some voluptuous feeling; and, if she did not actually aid and abet Jean in the effect he was producing, at least she did not hinder him. In the last act she simply did not count: after *Tristan's* death one felt that all was over. Miss Brema's *Brangaena* was fine in every way, though she was seriously hampered by having to play to so very unquely and colourless an *Isolde*. As some one has already remarked, it seemed as though *Brangaena* were the *Isolde* and *Isolde* *Brangaena*, and this owing to no overdoing of things by Miss Brema. It only remains to be said that the orchestra was again anything but first-rate. Mr. Seidl has no delicacy, and no power of carrying on the melody of the orchestra in a continuous unbroken sweep; and these faults, obvious enough in *The Valkyrie*, were still more obvious in *Tristan*.

The production of *Siegfried* was to have been the grand event of the season; but so far as public attendance goes, to-night has been something of a fiasco. However, this did not damp Jean's ardour: he sang as though the theatre presented the most brilliant appearance he had ever seen. Not that his *Siegfried* is very good. As a mere piece of vocalism it would be impossible to beat, or indeed to match it. But it is not *Siegfried* at all. Of the real *Siegfried's* exuberant vitality, his eternal youthfulness, there is nothing. For the most part it has scarcely even energy enough; and when there is energy it is of the wrong sort—the adult's cool, determined energy, not the fresh, spontaneous, bubbling vigour of youth. I sadly missed this vigour and joy in life—as much in the earlier scenes as in the later ones. The best scene was the Forging of the Sword: here there were vigour and strength—vigour and strength of the wrong sort, but of a sort that was better than none at all. But the whole part needs another twelvemonth of hard study before it will compare with Jean's *Tristan*; and it should be studied, too, with the help of those who understand what Wagner

## NUTS AND NETTLES,

from Alfred Moffat's

## "Merry Mimic Measures"

Edward Oxenford.

(Augener's Edition N<sup>o</sup> 8929.)

Moderato.

PIANO.

Moderato.

(1) With - in this wood the nut - trees grow; The spot to find them  
 Key F: { s.f | m :- :d id :- :d | m\_r :d :r id :- :s.f | m :- :d id :- :d }

(2) Sing  
 well we know; And nuts in plen - ty there hang low, (2) Sing  
 { m\_r :d :r id :- :s, | 1, :- :t, id :- :r | m :- :f is :- :d }

(3) With nice hooked sticks we'll  
 { | d :- :1 is :- :f | m :d :- :1 : :s.f | m :- :d id :- :d }

ten.

cresc.

Music by Edward Oxenford. Arranged by Alfred Moffat.

(1) Pointing towards the left. (2) Waving right arm. (3) Showing sticks.

Note:- Baskets and sticks—hooked, if available—should be carried.

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draw them down, So ripe and full and rus - set brown; And  
 {m\_r :d :x :d :- :s.f|m :- :d :d :- :d|m\_r :d :x :d :- :s, }

lots we'll car - ry back to town, (1) Sing heyl sing heyl for nut-ting!  
 {1, :- :t, :d :- :x |m :- :f :s :- :d |d :- :l :s :- :f |m :d :- :l : : ||

cresc.

(2) Ah! here's the place, but what are these That thick - ly spread be -neath the trees, (3) And  
 Lah is D.  
 {m |m :- :t, :t, :- :x |r :d :t, :d :- :d |r :- :m |f :- :l |l :s :ba is :- :m }

rall.

reach, the low - est to our knees? (4) Cry oh! cry oh! for net-tles! (5) But  
 {m :- :t, :t, :- :x |r :d :t, :d :- :m |l :- :m |d :- :t, :t, :l, :- :m }

frall.

(1) Waving right arm.

(2) Looking down.

(3) Drawing back. (4) Jump and skip. (5) Preparing to jump.

come, now o - ver let us spring, Just like a bird up on the wing; And  
 {m :- ;t, It, :- ;x | r :d ;t, id :- ;d | x :- ;m If :- ;l | l :s ;ba ls :- ;m }

rall.

if per-chance we get a sting, Cry oh! cry oh! for net-ties!

{m :- ;t, It, :- ;x | r :d ;t, id :- ;m | l :- ;m id :- ;t, | t, l, :- ; : |

f rall.

A - las we in our hur - ry, all Have bumped and come a

{s.F. | m :- ;d id :- ;d | m r :d ;x id :- ;s.F | m :- ;d id :- ;d }

sf

sf

rall. ten.

pre - ty fall And voi - ces as a - way we crawl, (1) Cry

{m r :d ;x id :- ;s, | l, :- ;t, id :- ;x | m :- ;f is :- ;d }

cresc.

rall. - -

(1) Rubbing shins and hands.

o-o-o-h! cry o-o-o-h! for net - tles! The nuts may in the  
 { |d :- :l is :- :f |m :d :- :l : :s.f |m :- :d |d :- :d }

branch - es grow; They've on - ly brought us pain and woe; They  
 { |m r :d :r |d :- :s.f |m :- :d |d :- :d |m r :d :r |d :- :s. }

seem to mock, as off we go (1) Cry o-o-o-h! cry o-o-o-h! for  
 { |l, :- :t, |d :- :r |m :- :f |s :- :d |d :- :l is :- :f }

net - tles!

(1) Retiring.

*rall. ten.*

*cresc.*

*rall.*

*p a tempo*

*s.f.*

(1) Retiring.

meant by it; for to one who has been trained, as Jean has, in the Italian school, the true inwardness of it is far from being so evident at a first glance as that of *Tristan*. As for the other parts, Lieban, the Berlin tenor, played Mime very passably; and Miss Strong's Brunhilde, though often a trifle stiff, was a creditable impersonation of a fearfully difficult part. The orchestra was once more only middling. Whether it will ever be better remains to be seen; but I am beginning to be afraid that we overrated Seidl at first. So far, excepting in *Lohengrin*, he has shown no high ability.

The season may already be considered nearly over. The Jubilee will probably spoil it as everything has been spoilt. But I am hoping that *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* will be given before the end, with the recitations accompanied on the harpsichord, as the composer directed. The harpsichord will be played, according to the announcement already made, by Mr. Dolmetsch.—Your devoted servant,

ITALIANOPHILE.

## Concerts.

### THE HANDEL FESTIVAL.

The Handel Festival this year has had to contend with many rival attractions, some of them by no means favourable to music. The great excitement caused by the Jubilee celebrations has to some extent also interfered with arrangements at the Crystal Palace. But it is greatly to the credit of Mr. Manns, and all who have shared his labours, that their first consideration has been to see that justice was done to the immortal works of the great master. A word of recognition is due in this respect to Mr. Henry Gillman, the Crystal Palace manager, who has taken especial pains to forward the views of Mr. Manns. Considering the many influences tending to draw visitors from the festival, the attendance has been fairly good, although there were not so many visitors as might have been expected.

Fortunately, there was no diminution in the enthusiasm of the choir. To them Handel was everything: no matter what races, what fêtes, what Jubilee festivities might be in progress, their special business was to celebrate with heart, soul, and voice the glory of Handel. We are inclined to think that so fine a volume of tone was never produced on any previous occasion. It was rich, full, well balanced, and splendid in quality, and it is only simple justice to Mr. Manns to acknowledge the immense pains he has taken to produce the magnificent result. Possibly it was owing to the great demand at present for instrumental performers that the orchestra was, at all events in the strings, somewhat weaker than three years ago. Then the executants numbered 519. On this occasion they amounted to 486. Therefore a slight deficiency in power and brilliancy might be remarked by those who had unusually good memories. But it would be the height of injustice to find any fault with the orchestra or with the excellent leader, Mr. A. V. Belinski, of the Crystal Palace band. Mr. Walter W. Hedgcock, for the second time, had the important post of organist, and on the selection day performed the Organ Concerto in B flat, No. 2. One might wish, and no doubt the organist did wish, that organs, like violins, improved with age; but such is not the nature of things, and we must take the Crystal Palace instrument as we find it. The solo vocalists were happily chosen. Miss Ella Russell, who has returned from a brilliant tour in America, has retained the full power and resonance of her fine voice; Miss Clara Butt's rich tones told with fine effect. Messrs. Edward Lloyd, Barton McGuckin, and Andrew Black were also in good form, and at the Wednesday festival Madame Albani, Madame Nordica, and Mr. Santley were added to the above list. Of these we shall speak later, but may remark upon the pains taken by Mr. Manns rehearsing no less than twenty choruses on the Friday. Never has such care been exercised on any previous occasion. The old maxim that "whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well," was

carried out to the letter by the admirable Crystal Palace conductor.

From Friday's rehearsal, with its splendid promises, we pass to Monday with its noble performance. June 14th was a typical festival day. There was a glorious sun, but a refreshing breeze, and everybody seemed delighted at the prospect of once more hearing the masterpiece, *The Messiah*. The anticipations formed as to the choir were more than realized. There might be noticed in one or two instances slight defects, but the broad, full tone of the greater choruses came out with astonishing grandeur. With regard to the soloists, no single human voice can ever quite satisfy the hearer in so vast a space, but Madame Albani and Mr. Edward Lloyd did all that was possible, and may be congratulated on their success. Madame Mackenzie, who is proving herself a worthy successor to Madame Patey, may be complimented upon her dignified style and pure tone. She took no liberties with the text, but gave Handel pure and simple, and therefore pleased everybody. As for Mr. Santley, each Handel Festival seems to give him a new lease of artistic power. He sang, "Why do the nations" grandly, and his command of the florid passages was worthy of any period of his career. Mr. Manne conducted with unflagging energy from first to last. A singular effect was produced by the presence of many Oriental visitors in their showy costumes. Probably the spectacle rather than Handel's music had attracted them, yet they were evidently moved by the majestic body of tone and the military precision of attack in the glorious "Hallelujah Chorus." The Selection Day, June 16th, was attractive. The choruses from *Deborah* and *Solomon* again displayed the high merits of the choir. The coronation anthem, "Zadok the Priest," given in honour of the Queen, was finely performed. Madame Nordica greatly distinguished herself in "Let the bright seraphim," Mr. Morrow's trumpet obbligato being admirable. "From mighty kings" was given with splendid effect by Miss Ella Russell, and Miss Clara Butt was excellent in "Ombra mai fu." Madame Nordica had another triumph in "Oh! had I Jubal's lyre." Madame Albani took the air "Sweet Rose and Lily," from *Theodora*, in a higher key than usual, and rather too slowly. Her success was greater in "Sweet Bird," to which Mr. Fransells played the flute obbligato. Mr. Edward Lloyd's version of "Love in her eyes," was as perfect as ever, and Mr. Santley's "!! ruddier than the cherry" caused immense enthusiasm. Messrs. Barton McGuckin and Andrew Black were also successful.

On Friday *Israel in Egypt* was performed in magnificent style. It was generally considered that the choir was finer than ever in execution and tone. Mr. Manns never had a greater triumph as a conductor. Miss Ella Russell, Madame Clara Samuell, Madame Mackenzie, and Messrs. Lloyd, Santley, and Andrew Black were the soloists. Hearty cheers were given at the close for the Queen, and then Mr. Manns had a greeting he will probably never forget. He had well earned this cordial recognition.

### PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.

On June 3rd Dr. Hubert Parry's Theme and Variations for Orchestra in E minor was performed. The only regret one could feel in association with this work was that the composer had not given himself greater scope by choosing a longer theme, but none could have been disappointed with Dr. Parry's masterly treatment. The composition was learned, ingenious, and full of new ideas, and at the close the delighted audience called the composer three times. It should be added that he conducted his own work, also that the orchestra loyally took pains with the composition of a native musician. The construction of the variations is rather singular. Many composers would have worked out the piece as a symphony, for the variations are by no means closely connected. Señor Sarasate appeared at this concert, and played Mendelssohn's violin Concerto, which, although it is becoming hackneyed, acquired freshness and charm owing to the pure tone, the delicate expression, and the brilliancy of Señor Sarasate's execution. He certainly has not the breadth of Dr. Joachim, who surpasses everybody in his interpretation of this work, but the speed at which the finale was taken quite excited the audience, and the enthusiasm was so great that the Spanish artist gave one of his

own pieces in response to the compliment. Sir A. C. MacKenzie conducted Beethoven's  *Egmont* overture, and Spohr's symphony called—or say miscalled—"The Power of Sound." Madame Sigrid Arnoldson was the vocalist, the brilliant Swedish prima-donna singing the vocal waltz from Gounod's *Mireille*, and a Russian song, "Die Nachtigall," but she was not particularly fortunate in the orchestral accompaniments. Probably they had not been sufficiently rehearsed, or—terrible thought—not rehearsed at all. Such things have been heard of, and then the imperfect results fail to cause surprise. Without uttering words of condemnation, we may be excused in saying with Shakespeare, "Can such things be, and overcome us like a summer cloud without our special wonder?" On Thursday, June 17th, there was a special commemoration programme in honour of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. The programme commenced with Weber's Jubilee Overture. Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony was appropriately given, as the composer dedicated it to the Queen in 1842. Mackenzie's genial *Britannia* overture was a welcome item. There were also some novelties, among them an "English Fantasia," by Mr. Edward German, and "The Dream of Endymion," a vocal score by Mr. F. H. Cowen, Mr. Ben Davies being the vocal soloist. The instrumental soloist of the concert was Mlle. Adele Aus Der Ohe, who played Schumann's *Pianoforte Concerto*.

#### M. PADEREWSKI.

THE fact that the famous pianist announced one recital this season had the effect of attracting an enormous audience to Queen's Hall on Tuesday, June 15th. It will be remembered that at a recent Philharmonic concert a visitor requested M. Paderewski to "give something without the band." On this occasion those who had the same desire must have been gratified, for a more perfect display of solo pianism has rarely been heard. M. Paderewski commenced with a delightful rendering of the variations and fugue by Brahms on a theme of Handel. This was a distinctly "happy thought" during a Handel Festival. The only sonata was Beethoven's in D minor, Op. 31, in which the pianist was particularly excellent in the second and last movements. The "Carnaval" of Schumann rather surprised us, owing to the difference of the reading from that of Madame Schumann. But "new readings" are the craze of our time. The most interesting portion of the "Carnaval" music was that in which we get an echo of Chopin. Here the pianist was simply exquisite. His playing of the famous Davidbünder March at the close was also magnificent, and the audience tried hard to get it repeated, but M. Paderewski wisely refused. Perhaps the most delightful performance of all was the group of Chopin pieces. In this instance the critic forgot criticism and became an enthusiast like the rest. The Chopin selection included three studies from Op. 25, and the wonderful A flat Polonaise, the latter given in a positively electrical style. Liszt's transcriptions of the first and fifth of the "Chants Polonais" were splendidly played, and Liszt's sixth "Hungarian Rhapsody" evoked a storm of enthusiasm and excitement and calls for the pianist, who returned to the platform, and gave a study of Chopin and another of Liszt's Rhapsodies. Even this was not enough for the musical cormorants, but it was enough for M. Paderewski, who then retired finally.—At the Queen's Hall Concert of Saturday 19th, M. Paderewski played Chopin's F minor Concerto, and the Scherzo from Liszt's Concerto in D minor, No. 4, with immense success. The orchestra, under Mr. Wood, gave Tschaikowsky's Pathetic symphony, and other works, admirably. Miss Clara Butt was the vocalist.

#### THE NEW RUSSIAN PIANIST.

IT must be strange to many old-fashioned lovers of music to remark the names of the performers who now appeal to the public. But most of all it must surprise them to notice the great Russian musical invasion. Time was when Muscovite music was placed in the same category as Chinese. It was called by an eminent authority "barbaric jingle." But now Russian composers and Russian performers are making astonishing progress, and have to be reckoned with in the world of music. The latest representative is M. Gabrilowitsch, who having startled an English audience at a concert, gave a recital

on his own account at St. James's Hall on Whit-Tuesday. It was an unlucky day for the purpose, and the audience was a small one. But if M. Gabrilowitsch has the courage to persevere he will soon become famous, for he is truly a "sensational" pianist, and although but nineteen years of age, has acquired a command of the keyboard which is astonishing. We shall not enter into the question as to what musical art gains by these displays. Little enough as a rule, but while there is a demand for musical fireworks, they will continue to explode. Fortunately, the new Russian pianist is a genius in his way, and has other and better qualities than mere finger dexterity. One can feel an interest in his playing, even in his rendering of such composers as Chopin and Schumann. This is saying a great deal for a "sensational pianist," but it is only fair to speak as we find, and we find in M. Gabrilowitsch a pianist likely to come to the front. He even comprehends the genius of Beethoven, and may possibly at no distant day become an admirable interpreter of that great master's works. A curious comment upon his playing was made by a musician present at the recital, who said, "Nothing is too hot or too heavy for this Russian." In simple English this probably meant that M. Gabrilowitsch was master of all styles, and that any difficulties could be surmounted by him.

#### MADAME MELBA'S CONCERT.

PRIMA-DONNA policy is, as Lord Dundreary used to say, "something that no fellow can understand." We were gravely assured that on Wednesday, June 9th, Madame Melba would make her "only appearance in London during the present season," but the very next day an announcement was made of her engagement at the Royal Opera. All we need record is, however, that Queen's Hall was crowded to the last seat, and that Madame Melba was in splendid voice. She sang "Parigi, o Cara," the gushing duet from *Traviata*, with Mr. Ben Davies; the "mad" scene from *Lucia*, which caused a mad scene of enthusiasm and applause. Then the brilliant Australian vocalist gave Massenet's "Sevillana," which being encored, Madame Melba responded with Bemberg's "Chant Venitien." Miss Clara Butt sang beautifully, and Mr. Kennerley Rumford was also one of the vocalists. There was an orchestra, conducted by Signor Arditi and Mr. Landon Ronald.

#### NEW ORATORIO.

IN these days a new oratorio is a novelty, and especially rare also is the idea of introducing Moses as the central figure in a work of that kind. The composer is the Rev. Marcus Hast, and his work was performed at Queen's Hall on Wednesday, June 9th. The composer has been indebted to Mendelssohn and to some extent to Spohr, but we could trace scarcely any echo of Wagner, which was almost surprising just now, when, after caricaturing that composer so long, everybody is bent on imitating him. Mr. Hast calls his oratorio *The Death of Moses*, and although the subject is a difficult one for the modern mode of treatment, the composer has displayed musical ability worthy of much commendation. Some of his choruses are well constructed and ingeniously harmonized. The solos are hardly so good, there being a certain monotony which the vocalists could not overcome. Madame Marie Duma, Madame Annie Marriott, Mr. Iver McKay, and Mr. Frangcon Davies were the soloists, and Mr. Churchill Sibley conducted. Considering the difficulty of his task, the composer achieved no little success.

#### "POÈME ALPESTRE."

ON Thursday, June 10th, M. Jaques Dalcroze, the Swiss composer, produced at St. James's Hall a work under the above title for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. It was written for the Geneva Exhibition last year, and is a thoroughly national work, introducing a great number of Alpine melodies, which are ingeniously interwoven with the subject. Probably the composer, who must have gone to much expense in producing his *Poème Alpestre* in London, was disappointed in not having a larger audience, but the time was not favourable for a new work in a style quite unfamiliar to an English audience. But there was merit in the production, and Miss Nina Faliero as the chief vocalist deserved commendation.

## SEÑOR SARASATE'S CONCERTS.

THE first of the famous Spanish violinist's concerts took place on Saturday afternoon, June 12th, in the presence of a very large audience. He played finely, and showed his reverence for classic masters by commencing with Bach's Third Sonata for pianoforte and violin. Dr. Otto Neitzel accompanied, and it was singular to hear a visitor in the balcony objecting to the pianist playing too loud: "We want to hear the tones of the violin," said the visitor, who later on called out: "The pianist is still too loud." As a matter of fact, Dr. Neitzel was rather too forcible for the delicate tone of the Spanish fiddler. But if audiences adopt the plan of criticising *vivid voce*, critics will have to resign, and public performers will have a hard time of it. Señor Sarasate introduced "Variations on a Mountain Air," a piece of the Paganini school, which had an enthusiastic reception, and played a suite of Emile Bernard in admirable style.

## RICHTER CONCERTS.

WHETHER in consequence of the Jubilee or not, concerts of the higher kind have not been frequent during the month of June, but the concert of Dr. Richter on the last day of May was remarkable owing to the production of a new symphony in E, No. 6, and called "The Idyllic," by Mr. Cowen. We must hear this work again ere we can speak with decision as to its merits, but the impression left by a first hearing—late at night, too—is that Mr. Cowen is still advancing, and the proof that Dr. Richter believes in the work is found in the fact that the great conductor intends to perform the symphony at Vienna. Nothing would please Mr. Cowen's friends better than to hear of the work being played in that city. It is in the orthodox style, and in four movements. At the close the composer was called for enthusiastically. It was at the same concert that the new Russian pianist, Gabrilowitsch, made his *début* with such great success. The last concert on Monday, 14th, was devoted to Wagner and Beethoven.

## MADAME PATTI'S CONCERT.

ON Thursday, June 3rd, Madame Patti gave a concert at the Albert Hall, which was, of course, completely filled, for the popular prima donna has not lost her hold of the public in the slightest degree. Details are hardly required, the programme being quite familiar in style. Madame Patti sang with her accustomed success, and her efforts evoked even more than the accustomed enthusiasm, mingled also with not a little sympathy, for it was known that M. Nicolini was lying ill at Craig-y-nos Castle, where Madame Patti returned on Saturday, June 5th. Miss Clara Butt, Mr. Ben Davies, and Mr. Andrew Black were among the vocalists, and M. Jean Girard and Mr. William Henley (the new violinist) played solos. Mr. Ganz and Mr. F. T. Watkis assisted at the pianoforte.

## MR. JOHANN KRUSE'S CONCERT.

ON June 1st Mr. Johann Kruse, the excellent Australian pupil of Dr. Joachim, gave a concert at St. James's Hall, and displayed talents of a very artistic kind in a concerto of Spohr. Madame Blanche Marchesi was the vocalist, and her singing of Massenet's "O mes soeurs" was particularly fine. A competent orchestra, conducted by Professor Stanford, accompanied Mr. Kruse in excellent style.

## MISS ROSA GREEN'S CONCERT.

MISS ROSA GREEN, the mezzo-soprano vocalist, and one of the best singers we have had from America for years, gave a concert at Queen's Hall on Friday, June 4th, with considerable success. Miss Green's own singing was fully appreciated, and she had the assistance of several popular vocal and instrumental artists, among them being Messrs. Andrew Black, Johannes Wolff, M. Hollman, &c.

## MISCELLANEOUS MUSICAL ITEMS.

MR. E. C. HEDMONDT intends to make another attempt to give Wagner in English. He has arranged with Mr. Beerbohm Tree for a brief season at Her Majesty's Theatre, commencing on September 6th. Amongst other novelties Mr. Hedmondt intends to produce Mr. Franco Leoni's new opera, *Rip Van Winkle*, in

which he will undertake the principal character.—Messrs. Chappell & Co. are having a grand pianoforte decorated with scenes from the Queen's life by M. Louis Silas.—On June 5th M. Johannes Wolff and M. Gabriel Fauré gave a concert at St. James's Hall, the compositions of the Parisian musician occupying almost the entire programme. The printed programme was so vague that one had to trust to memory for the most part, but amongst the interesting items was M. Fauré's first quartet, admirably performed by the concert-givers, assisted by Mr. Gibson and Mr. Paul Ludwig.—Miss Clotilde Kleeberg has been playing to the Princess of Wales at Marlborough House with great success.

Mlle. Pancera's second pianoforte recital took place on June 3rd, at St. James's Hall, when she performed with much success a number of showy pieces, chiefly of the bravura order, such as Chamade's "Les Sylvains" (encore), Moszkowski's "Etincelles," Brahms' Variations on a Theme by Paganini (Op. 35), a Liszt Tarantella, etc. The only work of importance was Schumann's Fantasia (Op. 17), which was given with great brilliancy and force; indeed, all Mlle. Pancera's renderings are remarkable for their tremendous vigour and virtuosity, and the occasional exaggerations of expression are all the more to be deplored in so brilliant and accomplished an executant. Mention should also be made of her very successful and spirited performance of Scarlatti's Capriccio, of which the audience demanded, and obtained, a repetition.

An unusually interesting, not to say unique, invitation recital was given on June 5th, at the Salle Erard, by two gentlemen who described themselves as, respectively, "Anglo-African" and "Afro-American"—Messrs. Coleridge-Taylor and Dunbar. The musical part of the programme was from the pen of Mr. Coleridge-Taylor, the song-lyrics being the work of Mr. Dunbar, who also recited a number of his own poems. With regard to the latter, although the humorous verses and those in "negro dialect" found most favour with the audience, many of the serious ones were distinguished by delightfully quaint fancies. Mr. Taylor's music was all of a high order and uncommon originality; of the songs, "How shall I woo thee?" and "A Corn Song," sung by Mr. Gregory Hast (recalled after the last-named), were particularly fine; "Dawn," "Starry Night," and "Over the Hills," remarkably pretty and melodious, and "Ballad" very effective—these sung by Miss H. Jackson. The only instrumental items were the "Fantasiestücke" (Op. 5) for string quartet, which drew forth such high encomiums from the press on its first production, two years ago, and the recently published "Hiawathan Sketches" for violin and pianoforte (played by Miss Marie Motto and the composer), a series of three pieces—first, "A Tale," a very fine and taking melody, with striking and peculiar cross rhythms; second, "A Song," of a melancholy, passionate type; third, "The Beggar's Dance," a highly original, wildly jovial production; the whole set forming an extremely interesting and musicianly composition.

## NOTES ON THE ACADEMIES.

THE London Academy of Music gave another of its well-known orchestral concerts at St. James's Hall on Friday afternoon, May 28th. It was ably conducted by Mr. A. Pollitzer, which alone is sufficient guarantee for a performance worthy of one of our best schools. Miss Lucy King-Hall showed wonderful skill and talent by her reproduction of the first movement of Saint-Saëns' Concerto in G minor for pianoforte and orchestra; while Miss Edith Varley plainly indicated by her fine rendering of Mendelssohn's pianoforte Concerto in D minor that her training had not been other than the best. Another concerto, this time for the violin, was brilliantly played by Miss Lena Fuller. Several good songs were sung, amongst which was Gounod's beautiful setting of "O Divine Redeemer," given by Miss Mary Hulburd. The orchestral performances consisted of compositions by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Weber, and Rossini, given in the usual praiseworthy manner.

Concerts innumerable are just now being given in connection with the Royal College of Music. Although they occur very frequently, we are pleased to note they do not deteriorate in quality, as indeed might be expected, each performance showing a fresh batch of students. The concert given on June 8th was a

Brahms commemoration, and consisted of the Tragic Overture, Op. 81, for orchestra; Rhapsody for Alto Solo, with male chorus, Op. 53, the solo taken by Muriel Foster; a Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra, in B flat, Op. 83, by Maud Branwell; "Schicksalslied" (A Song of Destiny), Op. 54, by the choral class; and Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68, for orchestra. The performances were indeed worthy of the applause gained, and little surprise need be shown at such an immense audience. One thing only is objectionable. The programme consisted of only five items, as indicated above, and if you happen to be late and miss the first item, arriving just as the second has been commenced, you are compelled to stand in a low passage with nothing better to do than twiddle your thumbs and gaze meekly upon the electric lights. Thus the programme is reduced to three items only. It is indeed a great pity if this cannot be arranged differently. We have faith, even if that faith is only as a grain of mustard seed.

The Guildhall School of Music students gave a very satisfactory concert at the City of London School, on Wednesday evening, June 2nd. One of the three soloists was Miss Dina Harwood, who gave the first performance of a vocal composition by Clarrisse Mallard, also a student of the school, who should be very grateful for the splendid way Miss Harwood brought the work before the public. Mendelssohn's G Minor Concerto was exceedingly well rendered by Miss Madeline Payne, and Mr. A. Montague Bowell sang "Eri tu," from Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*. The orchestral items were the overture to *Coriolan* (Beethoven) and Haydn's Symphony No. 2, in D. A performance of Flotow's opera, *Martha*, will be given by the students at the Lyceum Theatre on Monday afternoon, July 5th.

### Musical Notes.

THE Grand Opéra, Paris, has at last distinguished itself by the production of the long-prepared ballet-pantomime in two acts, *L'Etoile*, the scenario of which—we might almost say story, for it has a sort of story—is due to the collaboration of MM. Adolphe Aderer and the late Camille de Roddaz, while the music is the composition of M. André Wormser, the author of the music to *L'Enfant Prodigue*. The production of the ballet took place on May 31st, and it was coupled with a sort of revival of Massenet's *Thaïs*—a piece which has never yet shown any particular sign of failing vitality, and can scarcely be said to need any reviving. Thus far, M. Wormser's music is not regarded as very successful; it is said to be somewhat lacking in novelty of rhythms and originality of style, and the orchestration is at times too heavy. Notwithstanding the enormous time the ballet has been in preparation, the performance on the first night was anything but perfect, especially as regards the orchestra; but a few performances will, no doubt, set that right. The part of the Etoile was danced by that favourite star of the Parisian ballet, Mlle. Mauri, supported by Mlls. Invernizzi, Robin, and Torri, with MM. Ladam and Hansen. A dance of little girls was a very successful feature. In *Thaïs*, Mlle. Berthet and M. Vaguet succeed to the rôles originally played by Miss Sibyl Sanderson and M. Alvarez. A week later *Les Huguenots* was given for the first time since the destruction of the scenery some two years ago by the fire in the Rue Richer. A very strong cast was provided, Mlls. Bréval, Berthet, and Mme. Carrère taking the parts of Valentine, the Queen, and the page Urbain; M. Alvarez was the Raoul; M. Renaud, De Nevers; M. Delmas, Saint Bris; and M. Gresse, Marcel. M. Paul Vidal conducted. On June 11th, the *Samson et Dalila* of M. Saint-Saëns reached its first centenary performance.

IT is reported that the directors of the Grand Opéra

intend to make the production of the French version of the *Meistersinger* the great feature of next year's season, and that after that they will give a chance to *les jeunes* by producing *Gauthier d'Aquitaine*, by Paul Vidal. This seems not unlikely, as M. Vidal has already been connected with one of the directors—M. Gailhard—by composing the music to his opera *Guernica*, which had no particular success. We wish him better fortune next time.

WAGNER'S *Flying Dutchman* was produced, in a French adaptation by M. Ch. Nuitter at the Opéra Comique on May 17th. It does not appear to have had any such success as to lead one to suppose that it is likely to keep a place in the *répertoire*; but the way in which M. Pougin denounces and ridicules it in *Le Ménestrel* does little credit to the taste and judgment of that sometimes excellent critic. One would like to know why M. Lassalle—for whom it was said the work was to be produced—threw up his part, and left it to M. Bouvet to take the rôle of the Dutchman. Mlle. Marsy, and MM. Belhomme and Jérôme, were more or less adequate as Senta, Daland, and Erik. They must be exceedingly busy with rehearsals just now at the Opéra Comique, for not only are two short pieces—*Jacqueline*, by M. Georges Pfeiffer, and *Daphnis et Chloé*, by M. Henri Büsser, in preparation, but some preparations have to be made for the *reprise* of the *Phryné* of M. Saint-Saëns, which has been for some little time out of the bills, and which will now have a new *Phryné* in the person of Mlle. Marignan. M. Büsser is a young composer—only twenty-five—who won the Grand Prix de Rome in 1893, and the present is the first stage work of his to be produced. He has, however, ready a more important work—an opera, founded on Mérimée's *Colomba*, of which, if his present pastoral proves a success, we shall no doubt hear more. Mlle. Calvé has returned from America, and will shortly devote herself to the study of her part in Massenet's opera *Sapho*, founded on Alphonse Daudet's novel.

A MONUMENT of some size and importance has been erected at the village of Longjumeau to Adolphe Adam, the composer of the popular opera *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. It is somewhat curious that Adam is said to have never visited the place which helped to give a name to his best-known work. It is as though the Venetians were to erect a monument to Shakespeare in return for his having written a play called *The Merchant of Venice*.

MADAME ROGER MICLOS, the excellent pianist, aided by M. Pennequin, a violinist, has given a concert in Paris to make known the merits of F. W. Rust, a German predecessor of Beethoven, some of whose works have lately been published in Germany, and attracted much notice by their singularly advanced style and occasional curious anticipations of passages in Beethoven's works.

WE have nothing particular to record this month of the Royal Opera of Berlin, and must content ourselves with a few scraps of gossip concerning the past and future. The management is reported to have arranged for the production of Puccini's opera *La Bohème*, and this production is intended to be the first performance of the work in Germany. But, unless the Hofoper is a good deal more expeditious than usual, it will probably be anticipated by some other German theatres—such, for instance, as Hamburg. *La Bohème* has already been produced in a hundred Italian towns. The summer vacation having commenced, the performances are now given at the new Royal Opera House—that is, the remodelled Kroll's theatre. On May 21st, Rossini's *Barber of Seville* was played for the 300th time at the Berlin Opera. There is a report that the famous French

baritone, M. Lassalle, will appear during the summer season for the first time in Berlin.

THE last of the five concerts given by the Berlin Philharmonic orchestra in Paris took place on May 16th, and was a brilliant triumph for the performers and their conductor, Herr Nikisch. It seemed as though the applause would never end, and "*Revenez bientôt*" was shouted all over the hall. Such a welcome must be considered as creditable to the Parisians as to their guests, and even the press seems for once to have suppressed its hostility to Germany. Since their departure from Paris the orchestra has given concerts in Belgium, Switzerland, and the Rhine provinces, and is now gone to rest from its labours at the pleasant watering-place of Scheveningen.

THE building known as the Concerthaus in Berlin, where Bilsé gave his famous popular concerts almost thirty years ago, and where of late years Herr Meyder has given his popular concerts, is no longer to be used as a concert-hall. The farewell concert was given on May 1st.

THE twenty-third annual meeting of the members of the All.-Deutscher Musikverein at Mannheim was not altogether a success; some of the performances—operatic, orchestral, and choral—failed to reach what ought to be the festival standard, and the business arrangements made by the committee of management were not calculated to give satisfaction to the visitors. Neither D'Albert's opera, *Gernot*, nor Strauss's *Zarathustra* was well performed. Weingartner's symphonic poem, *Die Gefilde der Seligen*, which was conducted by the composer himself, fared much better, and is said to have made a great impression. Herr Reznicek's *Requiem* met with less favour than his sparkling Lustspiel overture. Herr Risler won great applause by an excellent performance of the solo part of the "Variations symphoniques" of César Franck—a fine work which deserves to be better known; and amongst the soloists, the fine voice and style of Mlle. Camille Landi excited great admiration.

SOME Festival performances of considerable merit took place at Wiesbaden in the latter half of May. The works given were *Barbiere* (with a new and tasteful mise-en-scène), *Aïda*, *Siegfried*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Mendelssohn's music. The German Emperor was present at several of the performances.

THE Hoftheater of Munich will make another attempt this year to establish a rivalry with the performances at Bayreuth. The works to be given include Mozart's *Idomeneus*, *Entführung*, *Figaro*, *Don Juan*, and *Così fan tutte*, and all Wagner's works excepting *Parsifal* and *The Ring*. The performances begin on August 1st, and with a few exceptions are continued daily until September 14th, a work of Mozart and Wagner being generally given alternately. The names of the artists who will take part will be given hereafter; but hitherto it has not been the lack of distinguished performers, but the want of rehearsal and of tasteful supervision, that has prevented the Munich performances from reaching such a standard as would cause them to be ranked with Bayreuth.

HERR KARL GOLDMARK, who has not, we think, produced anything new since his *Cricket on the Hearth*, has just issued three new works: Op. 40, Psalm 113 for mixed chorus and orchestra; Op. 41, two choruses for male voices; Op. 42, two choruses for mixed voices. Herr Richard Strauss, has also just published four songs for the voice with orchestral (or piano) accompaniment. They are probably intended for the concert-room rather than for private use.

DR. WILHELM KIENZL, the composer of *Der*

*Evangelimann*, has issued a setting of a poem by Richard Wagner, entitled *Buonaparte's Return*. The poem, which consists of five verses, was written at Paris, and bears the date 15th December, 1840, which was the day when the body of Napoleon was brought back to Paris from St. Helena, to be deposited in its present tomb in the Invalides.

THE last performance of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth this year, on August 19th, will be the hundredth performance that has been given on the stage. It is, of course, well known that *Parsifal* cannot be given on any other stage than that of Bayreuth.

THE Festival of chamber music given at Bonn by the Beethoven-Haus Verein was very successful. In Brahms' Quintet in F minor, Mr. Leonard Borwick played the piano part, with a stringed quartet from Cologne. In the composer's other and equally beautiful clarinet quintet the solo instrument was played by Herr Mühlfeld in company with the Joachim Quartet.

IT is quite a task to keep up with the numerous changes in conductors in Germany. The latest news in respect to these gentry is that Hofkapellmeister Erdmannsdörfer, who has only been at Munich less than a year, has resigned his post, and there is a report that Herr Bernhard Stavenhagen from Weimar is likely to be his successor. If so, there will again be a vacancy at Weimar, and the miserable squabbles which preceded the appointment of Herr Stavenhagen are likely enough to be renewed.

WE are not sorry to see signs of the beginning of a revolt in some German towns against the system of engaging eminent conductors from distant towns to come and conduct the chief concerts given by the regular orchestra of the place. This has been done for some time at Bremen, and now a commission has decided to recommend the Senate to put an end as soon as possible to the present arrangement, and have only one conductor, who shall reside in the place. At present Herr Georg Schumann is the resident conductor, and wields the baton at the less important concerts; but for the grand ones of the season Herr Weingartner comes over from Berlin, holds a rehearsal or two, and at the close of the concert gets all the applause and takes all the credit. The committee justly observe that such a musical town as Bremen ought to have a conductor who will take an interest in the musical life of the place, and identify himself with the forces under his command.

THE only new opera of which we have to announce the production this month is a one-act piece, *Marion*, by Karl Flinsch, a work somewhat in the modern Italian style, which was produced at Darmstadt on May 7th, and, thanks to a good performance, received with some favour.

THE loud-voiced tenor, Sig. Tamagno, has been heard at Frankfort and Leipzig, but the Germans do not appreciate him as the Parisians did.

THE Mozart-Verein of Prague has given a performance of *Don Juan* in aid of a fund for erecting a monument to Mozart. All the rôles were filled by amateurs, and the result was so successful that the erection of the monument may now be regarded as assured. But considering the intimate connection between Mozart and the inhabitants of Prague, most people, we fancy, will be surprised to hear that Mozart has not, long ago, had a statue at Prague.

THE success of Tschaikowsky's operas out of Russia has generally been so small, that we think it worth while to record the exceptional success of *Iolanthe* at Munich, where it was produced on May 20th. Frau Senger-Bettaque gave a very successful presentation of the title-rôle.

IT is somewhat strange to read that *Tristan und Isolde* was performed at Stuttgart for the first time on May 13th. The parts of the hero and heroine were played by Herr Gerhäuser and Fr. Sophie Wiesner.

THE Allgemeine Deutsche Musikerverband (General Union of German Musicians) proposes to issue an appeal to all Intendants of German theatres, inviting them, in case of vacancies amongst the members of their orchestras, to make it a rule to choose native musicians to fill the posts. Considering the habit of German conductors in foreign countries, almost invariably to fill vacancies by the appointment of Germans rather than of natives of the country where they are conducting, it would appear that the Union does not approve of the principle of doing unto others as you would they should do unto you.

A DONIZETTI exhibition, consisting of the objects which are to be sent to Bergamo for the exhibition there in September, has just been opened in Vienna. The composer spent some three years in Vienna, where he produced his opera *Linda da Chamounix*, and some other works. He was a great favourite at Court, where the Emperor and Empress greatly admired his music, and many memorials of his stay at Vienna are to be seen at the exhibition; one of the most curious and interesting is the original piano score of the opera of *La Favorita*, written throughout in the handwriting of Richard Wagner. There is also an interesting letter from Verdi, then a young man just rising into fame, in which he begs Donizetti to use his influence to get his opera of *Ernani* produced at Vienna.

THE grand new opera house at Palermo, of which we spoke last month, was inaugurated on May 17th by a performance of Verdi's *Falstaff*. A strange circumstance took place on the occasion. At the close of the performance there were loud calls—not, as usual, for the prima donna, or the tenor, or the manager, but for the architect, who had to appear three times to bow his thanks.

THE *Bohème* of Sig. Leoncavallo appears to have achieved a genuine success at the Teatro Fenice of Venice. The work was chosen for the final night of the season, May 16th, and the composer and performers were enthusiastically fêted. It is reported that arrangements are being made for its production in several important German towns—Hamburg, Dresden, Vienna, Prague, and Pesth.

THERE is a report that Sig. Sonzogno will resume his management of the Teatro Lirico Internazionale at Milan, which he founded and managed until about a year ago. During his season, which will cover six months from November 1st next, he proposes to give no less than twenty-four works, of which ten will be new, in addition to three ballets. We wonder where he is going to get ten new Italian operas worth hearing.

FROM a communication to the *Neue Freie Presse* by Herr Oppenheim, we learn that Sig. Leoncavallo admits that he had thought of composing an opera founded on the story of *Trilby*, which he regards as well suited for musical treatment. The same *chroniqueur* tells an amusing story of an unsuccessful attempt of the composer to make the acquaintance of Verdi. He was rehearsing a work which he had written for the exhibition at Milan, when it was announced that Verdi desired to enter to hear the work. "Throw the doors wide open," said the composer, "and place a chair for Sig. Verdi." The great composer, however, refused the seat, and preferred to remain standing behind a column. When the rehearsal was over, Verdi stepped forward, and everybody expected that he was going to say something pleasant. But he simply beckoned to a friend and asked him to point out

which was Sig. Leoncavallo. Being informed, he remarked, "Ah! the young man in a light overcoat standing near the leader," took a long look at him, and walked off without saying another word.

MUSICAL readers will be interested to hear that a second edition of Hanslick's book, "Aus dem Concertsaal," has just been published. It treats of music and musicians at Vienna between the years 1848 and 1868. Such a work is obviously much out of date, but Dr. Hanslick's criticisms, even when one differs from them, are always valuable and furnish interesting reading.

THE national theatre of Prague has just produced, with considerable success, a new opera in three acts entitled *Perdita*, founded on Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, with music by Joseph Nesvera, a composer who, though almost unknown in this country, enjoys a very high reputation in his own, which is Bohemia.

THE last concert for the season of the Musikverein of Copenhagen was devoted, as regards the first half, to the music of Brahms, the chief work chosen being the Symphony in E minor. In the second half of the concert a new composition for solo, chorus, and orchestra, entitled the *Hymn of Love*, by Carl Nielsen, made a very favourable impression. The concert ended with Heise's music to *Palnatoke* and the Wedding March from the *Undine* of J. P. E. Hartmann.

THE Polish composer Sigismund Noskowski, some of whose compositions have appeared in this journal, has produced at Cracow an overture, entitled *The Steppes*, and a suite for solo, chorus and orchestra, entitled *The Return*. Both these works were very favourably received.

MR. MAX PAUER has been created a Knight of the Order of St. Stanislaus by the Emperor of Russia.

CONGRATULATIONS to Sir G. Martin and Sir J. F. Bridge on their well-merited Jubilee honours!

THE post of Director of the National Conservatory of Music at New York, which was held for some time by Anton Dvorák, has just been filled by the appointment of a German musician, Fritz Scheel, whose name is unknown to us.

THE deaths of the month are not numerous, and are comparatively unimportant. Dr. William Spark, the well-known organist of the Leeds Town Hall, died on Wednesday, June 16th, in his 72nd year. He had been organist of the Town Hall for nearly forty years, was the composer of an oratorio—*Immanuel*—and the author of a rather uncritical life of Henry Smart, and of a volume called "Musical Memories."—Carl Mikuli, who died May 21st, was a Polish pianist who took lessons from Chopin at Paris in 1844, and afterwards edited an edition of Chopin's works, which has a certain value from its embodying corrections and remarks written by Chopin on the margin of the copy used by Mikuli at the time of the lessons. He had been Director of the Conservatoire at Lemberg (where he died) since 1858. He produced a large number of compositions which show him to have been a brilliant pianist, but, as regards style, are little but imitations of Chopin.—Paul Pabst, a distinguished Russian pianist and teacher, director of the Musical Society of Moscow, died there on May 28th. He was German by birth, having been born at Königsberg, May 27th, 1854.—Max Maretzcek, a once well-known impresario, who first induced Jenny Lind to visit America, died at New York on May 14th.—Franz Krolop, a most distinguished member of the Berlin Royal Opera Company, to which he had belonged since 1872, died on May 30th at the age of 58. He was an excellent bass-buffo, and will be greatly missed.—C. F. Kahnt, who died June 5th, was, up to 1886, the head of the well-known Leipzig music-publishing firm; he was also for many years

publisher and part editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, but in 1886 he retired both from his publishing and editorial posts. He published a considerable number of Liszt's works.

## MERRY MIMIC MEASURES.

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"Really, one feels tempted to review this music under three heads, like a sermon—music, words, and actions! Though music teachers will probably only care if the music is good, the children will be more interested in the words, and the audiences (for somehow one inseparably connects action songs with 'breaking-up' concerts) will look most for novel or pretty actions. Well, we suppose one need not say much about the last, except to mention, in passing, the distinctly novel and 'taking' umbrella actions in 'Sunbeams and Showers,' and that 'Aboard our Boat,' 'Nuts and Nettles,' 'Queen of the May,' 'Sowing and Reaping,' are also specially effective. With regard to the words by E. M. Traquair and Edward Oxford, most of those by the latter are very clever and amusing; such, for instance, as the delightful 'Disobedient Ducklings,' 'Sunbeams and Showers,' 'Nuts and Nettles,' and 'Our Army.' Miss Traquair is to be congratulated on two capital games, 'The Bird in the Apple Tree,' and 'Cat and Mouse, just the thing for little children. . . . Now as to the music. Most of it is bright and 'catchy,' with accompaniments simple enough for elder sisters or Board School pupil teachers, and there is plenty of variety among the thirty-six different tunes. The 'Shepherdesses,' for instance, irresistibly suggests a hymn, while the music to 'There's nothing else so dear,' would really make a beautiful hymn tune, and even that most quaint and charming song, 'The Disobedient Ducklings,' is a shade too ecclesiastical for the funny verses. Now the worst has been said—and that's not very bad!—let us pick out just a few special favourites, of which both words and music are capital, 'Sunbeams and Showers,' 'Nuts and Nettles' (already mentioned), 'The Merry-go-round,' 'Spring's Ball,' 'Our Army' (a delightfully vigorous march), 'Tally ho! 'Aboard our Boat,' 'Gallant Soldiers,' 'Our Beautiful Band,' the last five being sure to be popular with boys. For the rest, the work should have a large circulation, for it is thoroughly practical in every way, not least so in having the tonic sol-fa notation printed below the stave containing the voice part, and being so arranged that nearly all the accompaniments can be played without having to turn over a page."—*Monthly Musical Record*, June 1st, 1897.

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